

THE PRINCESS OF DOZYTOWN

RUTH PLUMLY THOMPSON







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of OZYTÖÖN

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Written by
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Cozytown is the delightfulest place imaginable ११

THE PRINCESS OF COZYTOWN



DID YOU EVER hear of Cozytown? And did you ever hear of the terrible GIANT GROWNUPNESS? Not that they belong together—my goodness, no! But in this story the giant—pshaw—here I am starting things heels over head—which would never do at ALL!

Well, well, if you have never heard of Cozytown it is high time that you did, and if you never heard of the giant it is because you have not had birthdays enough, that's all I can say. Why, Cozytown is the delightfulest place imaginable, 'though it does stand on the very edge of things, surrounded by a high, gray wall—that the name of this wall is "Facts" need not bother us, nor that to most people it is impassable. Those who know walk straight up to the wall and, taking four steps to the left of an iron ring which they will find without much trouble, they knock sharply on a stone which says BELIEVE! Presto! Immediately a little gate appears and in they go to the town itself.

There are rows of dear little houses just big enough for a boy or girl to play in, every house has a tiny garden and pink rose bushes that climb right to the chimney top and nod their heads in at the windows, which all have white ruffled curtains. Row upon row of these tiny rose-covered cottages, a white courthouse in the centre, a lovely lake in front, where china swans swim all day—this is Cozytown! And the clock over the courthouse always points to 3:00 which everyone knows

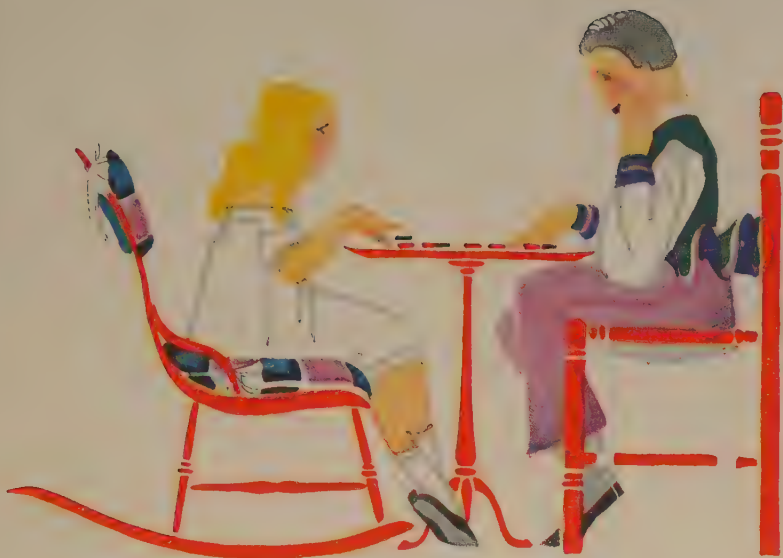
is the coziest hour in the world. Lovely trees, just about as tall as you, grow on each side of a cozy walk and, after the Princess' levee which, like all other events of importance in Cozytown, takes place at three o'clock, the Cozytown people walk arm in arm beneath the trees.

After this comes croquet in the Princess' garden, which is larger than other gardens. Some folks would think that croquet set very small, but it is quite large enough for the Cozytown folk, and here I've spoken not a word about them—I must begin at once.

Well, right next to the white courthouse lives Princess Poppsy—not in a castle—pshaw—there is nothing cozy about a castle—but in one of the little rose-covered cottages. There are porches on all sides and a lovely swing on the front one. There is a pink sitting room, where a cozy tea table is always set ready for tea, and where tiny rocking chairs and sofas with pink cushions all plumped up stand ready for company. There is a tall white cupboard in one corner, and that is where the Princess Poppsy keeps her peppermint drops. You have no idea how fond of these dainties the people of Cozytown are.

Next to the sitting room is a red room filled with tiny tables and chairs. On each table there is a game—there are checkers and parchesi, lotto and old maids, authors and tiddily winks—in fact all the games you have ever heard of! The dining room is in grey, which is the latest thing, and back of that is a kitchen with a gas stove and all modern conveniences. A comfortable looking Dinah doll was sitting in a rocking chair shelling peas as I peeped into the kitchen. She told me that the Princess was upstairs; so I went around to the side of the house and looked into the window of the bedroom.

It was lovely. A four-poster bed with dimity hangings, just about the size of a large crib, stood in the centre, and there was a dressing table with white candles and pink brushes, a bureau, and two comfortable rocking chairs. The Princess



was not there, however; so I looked into the red room again. Ah! There she was—a most adorable Princess—talking with a gentlemanly looking knitted doll who had evidently just arrived.

The Princess had blue eyes, curly hair and rosy cheeks and was dressed in a short white lawn dress. If I had not known that she was a Princess I might have taken her for an everyday little girl. However, the knitted doll bowed low over her hand and called her “Royal Highness;” so I knew that there could be no mistake.

“And how are our neighbors, the Dutch dolls?” said the Princess as she and the knitted gentleman sat down to play checkers. “I hear that Miss Amanda is suffering from a chipped arm,” said the knitted doll gravely. “I.....”

Just then a frightful thing happened!!! The town clock struck three. THREE I tell you. One—two—THREE!! Why, such a thing had never happened before in the history of Cozytown. What right has a Cozytown clock in striking three? I should like to know!

At the first stroke the Princess threw up her hands. At the second she grew stiff as a stick. At the third she swooned completely away and rolled under the table. The knitted doll seemed equally agitated. With the help of Dinah, who had run into the room with her apron over her head, he lifted the Princess up on the sofa—then fell headlong down the front stairs and into the street, his shoe button eyes starting from his head.

At the same identical minute all the other Cozytown folk came tumbling out of their houses. China dolls, wooden dolls, rag dolls, ran distractedly about wringing their hands. Teddy bears, pink rabbits, stuffed dogs and rocking horses stood in excited groups on the corners. A whole army of wooden soldiers came at a quick run down the main street. A jumping-jack hopped along the sidewalk calling "Help!! HELP!!"

"What's the matter? What does it mean?" called the Cozytown folk in their squeaky voices.

(And come to think of it, what queer folk these Cozytown people are!) Such confusion, such running to and fro you cannot imagine. "Silence!" cried a pink rabbit hopping into the centre of the square. "LISTEN!"

When the pink rabbit called, "Listen," everybody immediately stopped talking, that is, everybody except Jack-in-the-box. He continued to bounce up and down screaming "Help! help!" at the top of his Jack-in-the-box voice.

"Will somebody shut him up," said the pink rabbit crossly. Two wooden soldiers sprang forward at this, and, pushing Jack into his box, fastened the lid. The rabbit now proceeded: "If anyone can tell us the meaning of this strange happening," said he, "it is the Judge. Let us call the Judge."

"The Judge! The Judge!" shrilled all the Cozytown folk, and a plush dog ran barking off to the courthouse to fetch him. He returned in a few minutes followed by a

large owl, who looked cross and ruffled and kept with his claw the place in a book he had been reading.

"Did your Honor hear the clock strike?" said the Pink Rabbit nervously. The Judge opened his eyes a bit wider than they were opened already (which was wide enough in all conscience) and stared at the Pink Rabbit so hard that the poor fellow's ears stood straight behind and his collar wilted from very scaredness.



"I am NOT deaf," said he, after a terrible pause. "Certainly not! Certainly not—how stupid of me!" mumbled the rabbit apologetically. "What I meant to say was—were you not surprised to hear the town clock strike?"

"I am NEVER surprised," replied the owl haughtily.

"Oh dear, oh dear!" murmured the pink rabbit, mopping his head and looking more uncomfortable every minute.

"Have a peppermint?" interrupted the knitted doll gentleman, striding up to the owl.

The owl took the peppermint, and chewed and swallowed it gravely. "It's a warning!" he cried suddenly, and tucking his book under his arm, waddled back to the courthouse. "A warning! A warning!" echoed all the Cozytown folk looking at each other with alarm. "It begins with 'G'—" called the owl over his shoulder, and then hurried on faster than ever.

"A warning beginning with G!" growled a Teddy bear irritably. "G—G—G—," said all the Cozytown folk in their high, low and medium voices. Then down they sat upon the benches in front of the pond, and began thinking of all the things they could think of that began with "G." "Gad, gag, gage, gaiter, gait, gale—gale—I wonder if it's a gale?" murmured the knitted doll gentleman under his breath. "Gargle, garnish, garlic, garret!" came in muffled tones from beneath the lid of the Jack-in-the-box. Indeed, all the Cozytown folk were so busy saying over all the words beginning with "G" that they never noticed the Princess until she was right in the midst of them. Even the swans had stopped swimming about and rested motionless upon the surface of the lake with their necks curved to form the letter "G."

"What ARE you doing?" asked the Princess curiously. "Is it a game?"

"Game," rumbled a Teddy bear gloomily. "Maybe it's a game!" At this minute the Princess' cook Dinah came panting up. She began immediately to make all sorts of queer faces behind the Princess' back, holding her finger to her lips at the same time in a most mysterious manner. No one knew what she meant, but they stopped thinking of the "G" words for a minute and the knitted gentleman ran hastily to release Jack from his box, because the Princess did not like him to be shut up.

He unfastened the catch and out bounced Jack so violently

that the poor knitted person was flung bodily into a rose bush, where he stayed helplessly bent double until Dinah went to his assistance.

"Are you hurted, sah?" she asked anxiously, shaking him up and setting him on his feet. Then making sure that no one was looking she whispered, "Don't you all say nuffin' 'bout that clock strikin,' for the Princess has done forgot all about it!"

When the knitted gentleman landed in the rose bush, he looked so comical that everybody began to laugh. Then, all at once, remembering the owl's warning and the clock striking, they stopped as suddenly as they had begun. Only the Princess continued to laugh heartily, until seeing that she was laughing quite by herself she stopped too. The company stared at her dismally. "Has your Majesty," began the Jack-in-the-box gloomily, "so soon forgotten the stri——" He got no further for down swooped black Dinah and clapped the lid upon his head. The owl says it was a——," began the rabbit stepping forward importantly. Before he could finish, Dinah rolled her eyes in disgust, and, seeing no other way of changing the subject, plunged in the lake.

"Save her! Save her!" cried the Princess, wringing her hands. All the Cozytown folk rushed down to the water's edge. The wooden soldiers plunged in gallantly; it took the whole army of them to bring her to shore, she being a very stoutish person, and while they were wringing her out (what else could one do to a dripping rag doll?) she managed to tell them not to mention the striking of the clock to the Princess. The Captain immediately decorated her with a pink ribbon, which is the highest honor one can receive in Cozytown. I am sure she deserved it. She pinned it to her petticoat so that the Princess would not see it, and then suffered herself to be hung on a line over a fire to dry.

Meanwhile, the knitted gentleman had warned all the others not to mention the striking of the clock, and as they

loved the Princess dearly and would not have her worried for the world, they all put on their cheerfulest expressions and talked of everything else 'cept clocks and things beginning with "G."

"Let's have a tea party." said one of the Dutch dolls suddenly. "A tea party—a tea party! Hurrah for a tea party!" cried everybody delightedly. It takes so little to make Cozytown people happy that even so small a thing as a tea party throws them into a whirl of excitement. "Peach-iferous!" exclaimed the knitted doll gentleman, rolling his eyes rapturously. As for the rest, they seized hands—or paws, as the case might be—and danced merrily around in a circle with the Princess in the centre till they all tumbled over from exhaustion.

"May I have the honor?" said the pink rabbit at last, offering the Princess his arm. Dinah and the knitted doll followed (there are no social distinctions in Cozytown). A Dutch doll and a Teddy bear came next, and all the other Cozytown folk brought up merrily behind them, a wooden soldier band tooting away for dear life. "Do you feel quite restored?" said the knitted gentleman to Dinah. "All but a scorchness in my feet and a dampness in mah haid!" replied the good-natured cook, giving herself a shake. By this time they had come to the Dutch doll's cottage, which was next to the Princess' very own. "Now wait here," she cried, tripping up the steps, "until I ring the bell!" Her sister Hepzibah went in with her, while the rest of the company either sat on the porch or walked about the garden. It was the quaintest, old-fashioned garden you can imagine. Hollyhocks and poppies, bachelor buttons and mignonette—and all of them were doll size. Miss Amanda and Miss Hepzibah lived by themselves and more excellent housekeepers were not to be found in all of Cozytown. Miss Amanda's angel cake, and Miss Hepzibah's cookies were the pride of the town; so you can imagine with what impatience all of them waited to be bidden to the feast.



"Hurrah for a tea party!" cried everybody delightedly.



"I do hope there'll be crumpets," said the Princess to the pink rabbit. "So do I,—but what is the excitement in the garden, pray?" The wooden soldiers, the knitted gentleman, a French doll and the Jack-in-the-box had formed in an angry circle around a wooden goat. "I tell you he begins with a 'G,'" the Captain of the soldiers was saying in an agitated voice, as the pink rabbit and the Princess came up to the group. "Well, I am sure I can't help that," said the goat crossly. "I may begin with a 'G,' but I begin with a——!" (Here the goat made a threatening move with its horns.) "Arrest him at once!" thundered the Jack-in-the-box. Then catching sight of the Princess he disappeared into the box and shut the lid. "What's the matter?" inquired the Princess.

"Er-er—nothing, your Majesty," said the Captain of the wooden soldiers, touching his cap respectfully. "We were playing—er—er—a game—and the goat was it." "A very stupid game, I assure you," said the goat, glaring at the Captain and sidling up to the Princess. Further explanations were avoided, for at that moment Miss Amanda leaned out of the second story window and rang a big dinner bell. "Come on. COME ON!" cried the Princess clapping her hands, and, tumbling over each other, they all hurried in to the tea party.

Miss Hepzibah, her Dutch wooden face beaming with hospitality, stood at the door and welcomed each guest—just as if she had not seen them a few moments before in the garden. Miss Amanda, in a flutter of ribbons and excitement, led the way to the parlor. There the most delectable goodies were temptingly displayed upon a side table.

With little sighs of comfort and anticipation the company sank down upon the old-fashioned chairs and sofas.

"You're looking charming, my dear!" whispered the knitted gentleman in Miss Amanda's ear as she hurried toward the Princess with a platter of crumpets. Everyone in Cozytown felt that the knitted gentleman had his shoe-buttons (pshaw, I mean his eyes) on Miss Amanda.



Miss Hepzibah was charming. She presided at the tea table, and the wooden soldiers and the pink rabbit rushed here and there with cups of tea and plates of cake until everyone was served. Dinah, after much coaxing, consented to sing, and altogether the tea was a most delightful affair.

"Wait!" cried Miss Amanda, suddenly springing from her chair. "I have another surprise for you!" She hurried into the kitchen, returning the next minute with a plate of steaming gingerbread. Mm-mmm! What a delicious fragrance. The knitted doll took a huge mouthful, then with starting eyes ran to the window and hastily got rid of it. "G," he whispered in a terrible voice to the pink rabbit, who was on the point of devouring his piece at one gulp. "It begins with 'G'!" The same thing seemed to strike the whole party at once, and they all sat terrified with the gingerbread held a few inches from their mouths. All except the Princess. Just as she was about to take a bite of her piece, the knitted gentleman bumped her elbow and knocked her plate to the floor.

"How clumsy of me," he murmured, pretending to be greatly embarrassed, at the same time putting his foot on the cake and crushing it completely.

"It might have been poisoned," he whispered to the pink rabbit, wiping the perspiration from his knitted forehead. At this rather perplexing moment Judge Owl was announced. He always came late for tea, but nobody dared to object. He took a seat near the door and consumed ten

cups of tea without making any remarks; then, waddling up to the table, he took a huge piece of gingerbread and munching it hungrily took his departure.

"Well, it isn't the gingerbread!" exclaimed the knitted doll in great relief, fetching the Princess another piece. Everybody immediately began eating his gingerbread at that, and after they had eaten every bit of it, and after no one could possibly hold another crumb, they all went upstairs to the sitting room to finish the festivities with a concert. The pink rabbit agreed to act as master of ceremonies, and announced each number on the program with a bow and a flourish that was simply charming.

"A recitation by our talented friend, the knitted doll gentleman," said he, leading that person forward in the most approved style.

"Quoth a fat and jolly spider
To a thousand-legger spy:
'Let us run a race, my hearty,
And the prize shall be a fly!'

So they raced across the ceiling
And the thousand legger's feet
Moved in companies—two together—
In a manner very neat.

But, alas! he had not reckoned
With the ceiling as a track,
And he lost his tenth and nineteenth foot
Within a yawning crack!

He lost his feet—also the race—
The victor was the spider,
And when the fly saw who had won
She tried to run and hide her—

Uh—self," finished the knitted gentleman, at which the applause was tremendous. Indeed, Miss Amanda clapped so loudly that she split her silk mittens.

After a few more recitations, the wooden soldiers, under the direction of Miss Amanda and Miss Hepzibah, pushed back all the tables and chairs, rolled up the rugs, and made ready for a dance. Miss Amanda seated herself at the piano, the pink rabbit ran off to claim the Princess, and all the other Cozytown folk took partners for a Virginia Reel.

I wish you could have seen Princess Poppsy bowing and curtsying and romping through the figures; indeed, I think I may safely say that it was the most charming Virginia Reel that ever was, or ever will be danced. The wooden soldiers were a trifle stiff and precise, the knitted doll gentleman a trifle floppsy and lackadaisical, but who minded that? Miss Amanda struck the last few chords, swung around on the piano stool, and everybody, clapping and laughing, tumbled into chairs.

"One does have such a jolly time here" murmured the pink rabbit, fanning the Princess so briskly that her curls flew every which way. "I should say so!" agreed the Jack-in-the-box, hopping up and waving his arms enthusiastically, "I say——." What he was about to say, I have no idea, for at that instant the room grew dark as night. The windows were all at the end of the room, and a black cloud, or something black, shut out every bit of light.

"My heart!" gasped Miss Amanda, and one knew from the thump that followed that she had fallen off the piano stool.

"Halt! Silence! Keep your places!" cried the Captain of the wooden soldiers authoritatively. The knitted gentleman, rushing to the help of Miss Amanda, fell over a chair and lay groaning on the floor—and altogether the confusion was awful. No one halted, nor was silent, nor kept their places as the wooden soldier had commanded. Instead they all rushed for the door—or what they thought was the door—collided frightfully with each other and rolled about in the dark.

After what seemed to be an age, but was really only a few minutes, it grew light again. Holding their heads the

Cozytown folk sat up cautiously and looked about. Everything as usual. "We-ll," quavered the pink rabbit nervously, "this—is—er—very upsetting!" Then noticing that he was sitting upon a wooden soldier he jumped up hastily and ran to help the Princess, who had rolled under the sofa.

"Something must be done!" said the Princess as soon as she had caught her breath. "Oh mercy! Somebody pick up Miss Amanda!" Two wooden soldiers ran to her assistance. She was unhurt save for a dent in one cheek, which the knitted gentleman, who had also been picked up, assured her was most becoming.

Now began a serious discussion, and it all ended in the wooden soldiers forming ranks, marching bravely down the stairs and down in the garden. The others watched from the windows, ready to duck at the slightest warning. At first the wooden soldiers could find nothing amiss, then, stretching from one end of the garden to the other, they came upon a ~~——~~ a great sunken place.

Yessirree, stretching from one end of the garden to the other—like—well, a lake without any water in it. The wooden soldiers marched round and round it, trying to think how it had come there, and after a while Princess Popsy and all the others came tiptoeing downstairs, peering with scared eyes in every direction.

"It was an earthquake," said Jack-in-the-box, bending over as far as his springs would let him and touching the edge of the hole. "Nonsense," said the Pink Rabbit. "An earthquake would have knocked down our houses."

"What does your Majesty think of it?" asked the knitted doll gentleman, addressing the Princess. "I don't know what to think," sighed the Princess. "But when I look at it, I get the strangest feeling in my heart." The Princess looked appealingly around at her subjects and two big tears rolled down her cheeks. "Poor lamb!" murmured Dinah, and everyone began trying to cheer her up. Seizing hands, they danced 'round and 'round, until she had to smile in

spite of herself. "Now let's try to forget all about everything disagreeable!" fluttered Miss Amanda, and promptly told such a funny story that the knitted gentleman tied himself in knots he laughed so hard.

The Captain of the wooden soldiers, the pink rabbit and a few of the Teddy bears, however, slipped away from the rest of the company, because, as the Rabbit said, "The owl ought to know what's happened." He stuck his head out of the window after they had rung the bell several times and asked what was the matter. The pink rabbit explained as quickly as he could, and the next minute Judge Owl, in his high silk hat and his walking stick, hurried out. "Take me to the place," he commanded shortly. He walked slowly around the great sunken place, his eyes growing bigger and bigger, then he took a small glass out of his pocket and squinted through that.

What he saw through the glass must have been terribly upsetting, for his silk hat fell off and he dropped his cane.

"Look," he exclaimed in a shaky voice, handing the glass to the Rabbit. The Rabbit peered in it anxiously, with all the rest looking over his shoulder.



"A footprint!" he gasped at last. "A GIANT FOOTPRINT! And that, my dears, is just what it was. You see, the owl's glass was a shrinking glass and in it the great hole showed plainly as a footprint. "Never leave the Princess for one instant," said the owl turning to the Captain of the Wooden Soldiers. Then pulling his hat down over his eyes, he hurried away muttering, "Curumberty bumpus!"—which is Cozytown language for "Sakes alive."

The Captain of the wooden soldiers had no sooner recovered from the shock of a giant footprint in Cozytown than he rushed back to the Princess. You remember that the owl had said she must never be left for a moment. She and all the other Cozytown folk had crossed over into her garden and were in the midst of an exciting game of croquet. The Princess had just sent her ball through two wickets, and everybody was shouting and waving, as if they had not been frightened to pieces a moment before. That is the way with Cozytown folks, my dears, they never remember anything unpleasant. So the pink rabbit and the Teddy bears and the Captain of the wooden soldiers decided to say nothing about the giant footprint. Indeed, at the first opportunity, the pink rabbit remarked carelessly that he had every reason to believe that it was a slight earthquake that had disturbed them.

I have not mentioned the China doll from France, but do not imagine on that account that there was no such person in Cozytown. She was a very fashionable person, and all during the first part of our story was busily at work on a new gown; so THAT is the reason that I did not tell you about her before. Now she came stepping daintily across the lawn, her hair done in a wonderful knot on the top of her head, and her fan held just-so in her tiny right hand. "Ah!" murmured the knitted gentleman admiringly. "Wonderful!" exclaimed all the other Cozytown dolls, crowding around her and touching her dress enviously.

"Greetings, most high and gracious Majesty!" said she



in French, at the same time dropping a most beautiful curtsy. "Nonsense," said the Princess sharply.

It was not nearly so much fun since the French doll had arrived. The rag dolls and wooden dolls stepped about awkwardly and conversed in low whispers. The Teddy bears and wooden soldiers, the pink rabbit and the knitted gentleman were kept busy picking up her fan and kerchief.

Princess Popsy flew into a rage, which had never happened before. "Stop it—stop it!" she screamed at the French doll crossly. "You are nothing but an old toy, anyway—a silly old toy!" Scarcely had she finished speaking before the French doll pitched forward upon her face and lay stiff and stark upon the ground. "I've killed her!"

wailed Princess Popsy dropping down beside her. "I've killed her!" In vain they rubbed the French doll's hands and shook her violently up and down. Stiff and stark she remained, her big blue eyes staring vacantly up at the sky.

Of course the French doll was dead—as stiff and stupid as a doll in a toy store—and you all know how stupid that is. No dolly is really alive until she belongs to some little girl who believes in her. When Princess Popsy called her a toy, of course she toppled over, and nothing could bring her to life again. They worked over her a long time, then the Pink Rabbit and the Captain carried her sadly into her home, all the Cozytown folk following after.

No, not all—Princess Popsy herself remained behind. And then, the thing that began with "G"—the thing the owl had warned all the Cozytown folk of—came stalking up to the wall and looked over. No one was in sight, and with a chuckle, a most wicked chuckle, he stepped clean over the wall and strode up to the Princess. It was a Giant!

The Princess screamed but nobody heard her, and the next minute this Giant, this most horrible Giant, had tucked her under his arm, and made off with steps at least a mile long.

The minute that he had touched her the town clock began tolling furiously and two hands upon its face flew round and round as if to make up for the time they had pointed to 3:00. Out rushed the pink rabbit—out tumbled the knitted gentleman—the Dutch dolls—their hands pressed to their bosoms—out, I say, rushed everybody. The owl, ruffled and angry, scolded the whole company roundly for deserting the Princess. The wooden soldiers ran madly to and fro trying to find her, but all they could find were the giant footsteps of the wretch who had carried her off. Such a wailing and weeping and searching time you never have seen. Dinah cried until she was perfectly limp. As for the Dutch dolls, the paint was worn off their faces entirely by their salt tears.

"This won't help matters!" said one of the Teddy bears

gruffly. "Open the Gates!" ordered the owl, pushing to the front. Slowly the secret gates in the Wall of Facts opened and fearfully the Jack-in-the-box, the knitted doll gentleman and as many more as could crowd in, peered out upon the real world. Yes, there were the great footprints, and following their direction the Cozytown folks gazed upon the glittering spires of a distant city. It was so far away that they could just see it mistily. The silence that had fallen upon the company (for they were all thinking how far away was the Princess) was broken by the Captain of the wooden soldiers.

"Let's go and bring her back!" said he. "Spoken like the brave fellow you are!" cried the pink rabbit. "Come, who'll go along?" Immediately everyone rushed forward, old Dinah falling flat upon her nose. "Let me go!"—"No, let me go." "Let me." "Let me," cried everyone at once. "This won't do," cried the owl, "some of us must stay at home to keep things in order. Let our brave Captain here and half of his men, Miss Amanda and Dinah, the Pink rabbit, and the knitted doll gentleman rescue the Princess—the rest of us must guard Cozytown, and make it ready for her Majesty's return."

That night—and it was the first night that Cozytown had ever known—the Captain of the wooden soldiers, rag doll Dinah, Miss Amanda, the pink rabbit and the knitted doll gentleman set out for the distant city. The other Cozytown folk cheered from the wall, and bade them return safely. The real world is a dangerous place for toy folk, and peering nervously on every side the little company made what speed they could, then toward twelve o'clock made camp. The wooden soldiers set up the tents, which they had fortunately brought with them, and the whole company lay down and disposed themselves for sleep.

Toward morning the whole camp was thrown into a panic. A tiger had attacked the knitted doll gentleman, and by the time the wooden soldiers came to the rescue he was

almost undone—indeed he was unravelled to a frightful degree and quite weak from loss of wool. Fortunately Miss Amanda had her knitting needles with her and she soon knitted him together again, while the brave Captain chased the beast down the road. “Our misfortunes have only begun,” predicted the pink rabbit gloomily, coming out of a hole in the ground to which he had retired with all speed. It was not really a tiger, dears only a CAT, but I guess if you were only toy-size a cat would seem like a tiger to you!

Next morning, after breakfast of flap jacks and bacon cooked by Dinah, they set out once more upon their journey. It seemed that the pink rabbit’s prediction was only too true. How can I tell you all the troubles of that brave company on their way to rescue the Princess? A flock of geese chased them and pecked their heels viciously. A



terrible thunder shower came up in the night, blew away their tents and drenched them through and through. So, at the end of five days, it was a forlorn little company that stood at the gates of the city. Miss Amanda with her arm in a sling, and all the paint gone from her cheeks, the Captain and all the wooden soldiers streaked with dust and mud, Dinah in a sorry state of limpness, and the pink rabbit and the knitted gentleman were too washed out and shabby for words. "At last!" whispered Miss Amanda wearily, stepping in between the bars of the gate. At that minute they all gave a start. No wonder! For leaning back upon the cushions of a carriage that just turned into the street was Princess Poppsy herself. How the poor toys ran to keep the carriage in sight. It drew up before the door of a fine mansion, and the Princess (there was a young man with her I am sorry to say) and her companion hurried in, but before the door swung shut, the pink rabbit, who could run faster than the others, had slipped in, too.





A flock of geese chased them and pecked their heels viciously.

"Here's a nice state of things," said the knitted doll gentleman bitterly, looking at the closed door. But just then the rabbit's head appeared at a side window. They hurried around till they were beneath it and saw that he was letting down a piece of cord. "Found it in the scrap basket. Catch a-hold!" he whispered. One after the other they were drawn up and found themselves in a beautiful hall. "She's in there," said the rabbit, hopping sadly down from the window ledge and pointing to a large room that opened out onto the hall. The sound of music and laughter came wafting out to the forlorn little toys and made them feel shabbier and lonelier than ever.

At last they picked up courage, and, forming into a procession, marched bravely into the big bright room. There were a great many people there, and no one seemed to notice them. Keeping well out of sight they made straight for the corner where the Princess sat talking to a young man I have mentioned before. How the Princess had changed—goodness, but she seemed big—what was the matter? Rushing forward old Dinah threw herself at her feet! "Come back! Come back!" she wailed. "Have you forgotten us?" cried Miss Amanda. The Princess jumped to her feet with a little laugh. "Why how did they get here?" she murmured, half aloud. "What?" questioned the young man looking around.

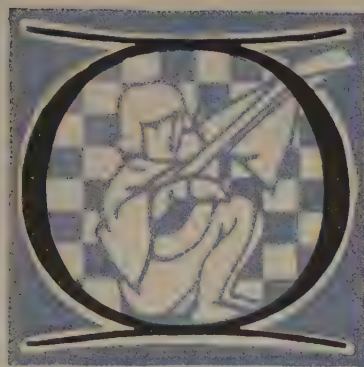
"Why, my old toys!" laughed the Princess. Horrors! At the word "toys," every one of the brave company toppled over and there they lay in a stiff little heap. Then they were carried up to the dim attic and there they are lying this very minute, lifeless and still, waiting for another little girl or boy to believe in them, to take them back to Cozytown with its rose-covered cottages and days that are all sunshine.

For Princess Poppsy had grown up, my dears. The Giant Grownupness had carried her away from Cozytown forever to a country where all must go at last and from which they may never return.



Waving his hands to and fro and droning in a sing-song voice.

THE PRINCE WITH A COLD IN HIS HEART



H, ONCE, my loves, my dears and ducks, there was a Prince who had caught cold in his heart. I—magine! Now, if it had been in his head, I should say he had been sitting in a draught or had gotten his feet wet, but a COLD IN HIS HEART, well, well! I hardly know what to say about it!

But 'tis just possible that one may take cold in one's heart by chilly draughts, and there were sighs enough to frost anyone in the great, huge, marble palace where the little Prince lived. His father, the King, sighed because he had nothing to do. (What can a poor King do with thirty-eleven servitors forever bouncing and bobbing around one?) And the Queen sighed because she had less than nothing to do; the Courtiers sighed because they were not Kings and Queens; so you can easily see for yourself that wherever the little Prince turned he was pretty sure of catching a chilly sigh. Then there was Court etiquette, which was much worse than wet feet for giving one a cold. The gardener could romp and hug his own little boys and girls as he chose, but when the Prince went walking in the garden he drew up stiff as a stone-man and 'twas, "Yes, your Royal Highness," and "It shall be done, Serene Excellency," and a lot more dampening expressions. The children were hustled into the cottage at his approach, for 'twould never do for them to stare at a PRINCE!

Ten paces behind, wherever he went, stalked a green and gold gentleman-in-waiting, and whenever the little Prince glanced around at that haughty person he bowed; and every

time he bowed the cold in the Prince's heart grew worse. Now, of course, when one has a cold in one's head one sneezes and coughs and talks through one's nose. But when one has a cold in the heart, one growls and scolds and talks through one's hat, so to speak, and that is how the oldest, knowingest wise man in the palace came to discover the little Prince's affliction.

And really, the Prince was sneezing (pshaw, I mean scolding) in a scandalous fashion. So this knowing old wise man bent himself double before his Royal Majesty the King and explained that the little Prince had a cold in his heart, which strange fact the King explained to the Queen, who explained it to all the Courtiers and they all shook their heads and rubbed their hands together and remarked politely, "How odd!" and "How extraordin'ry!" and other things which I haven't time to repeat. But one could not expect such exalted folk to be interested in anything so small for so great a time and pretty soon they politely forgot it, all except the old wise man.

Every night he sat poring over musty old books, trying to find a cure for heart colds. He would shake his head and mutter away by the hour and at last one night he had a great idea.

Tiptoeing into the beautiful room where the little Prince lay sleeping on a solid gold bed he began waving his hands to and fro and droning in a sing-song voice,

"Abraïne, Abracomp,
Abradonchi Abrapomp!"

There was more than this, but I dare not tell it, 'cause how do I know you'll not be trying it some day or other? Besides, I promised the old wise man not to tell!

After about so long a time and after touching the little Prince lightly on the forehead, the old man tiptoed out again and nobody was the wiser, for the gold and green attendant

in his gold and green pajamas was snoring like an engine, which was lucky for him.

Next day when the Prince awakened, oh, my stars! There in bed alongside of him lay a rosy little boy. When the Princed rubbed his eyes and stared in astonishment, he cried, "Good-morning!" and, running round to the other side of the bed, slapped him roundly upon the back. Which so surprised the Prince that he stared more than ever. WHY, no one had ever dared do such a thing before!

"Get up, you lazy fellow! Get up and we'll have a game of ball!" laughed the boy, following up this remark with a pillow which bowled his Royal Highness off the bed. And before his Royal Highness knew what he was about, he had seized the pillow and flung it back, crying, "Hey!" in quite an everyday unroyalish fashion. He was not a good aim (never having indulged in pillow throwing before) and the pillow hit the green and gold attendant, bumping his head against the wall.

"Eh—ah—er—certainly, your excellency!" he stammered, sitting up in bed and bowing with his night cap askew. "Did you call?"

"No, dolt, I was talking to this boy!" The Prince had to chuckle in spite of himself, the green and gold one looked so comical.

"Boy!" gasped the attendant, rearing his head and staring around the room like a giraffe. "Boy? Boy?" Every time he said "boy" his voice got a little shriller. "A thousand pardons! Serene Highness, I do not see any boy!" he choked out finally.

At this both boys burst out laughing—and who would not have laughed, pray? "He says he does not see you!" spluttered the Prince, and the two nearly bent double—indeed, they laughed till the tears rolled down their cheeks, which was the best medicine for a cold in the heart that I know.

This was too much for the attendant, however. Grabbing the silk quilt about him, he made one leap that brought him to the door.

With one last eye-popping look at the Prince he scuttled down the gold hall screaming: "Help! Help! Mad—quite mad! The Prince is mad!"

The green and gold serving person screamed so loud and raised such a to-do that soon the whole palace was awake and soon every one was saying to every one else, "And is the Prince really MAD?"

The King and Queen, followed by as many as could crowd into the doorway, scurried in their silk dressing gowns to the little Prince's room. The Prince was chuckling loudly. "All right," said he, with a wave of his hand, "I'll go swimming, even if I don't know how!" At which the Queen swooned away into the arms of a Marchioness, who swooned into the arms of a duchess, who swooned into the arms of a Dearknows-whateess; indeed, all of the royal Ladies toppled over like nine pins, while the King jumped up and down in a frenzy and tore large chunks from his beard. No wonder! For apparently the Prince was talking to himself—indeed, the strange little boy was perfectly invisible.

The Court Doctors and Wise Men first said that, then this, till the confusion was frightful; then the wisest old man, who had been laughing to himself in the corner, stepped up to the King. "The Prince must be left alone. No one must bother him or he will develop hardhartyancestoreetess!" he announced gravely. At the sound of this terrible word the Queen, who had come to, immediately toppled over again, and the King tore the rest of his beard out with one jerk. "Hardhartyances-toreetess!" echoed the Courtiers dolefully. Well, well, the end of it was that the Prince was let alone, the old wise man promising to watch him from a distance and be at hand in case he did anything violent—and violent things he most certainly did.

With no one to bother him, he rose in the morning and with the merry little boy went swimming and wading. They played ball and built forts, climbed trees and did all the other things that everyday little boys do. The Prince thought everybody in the palace mad, for whenever he mentioned his friend, whom he called Orin whenever he talked to him, the Courtiers looked at him sadly and shook their heads. "His poor mother!" they would remark, casting their eyes upward, or, "Poor, DEAR lad!" This set the two little boys laughing and every laugh warmed the little Prince's heart till finally, well, finally the cold in his heart was entirely gone.

He grew strong and healthy like Orin and merry and good-tempered like Orin; indeed, he even grew to look like him. The old wise man rubbed his hands with delight, for his charm was working beautifully. Then—

One morning when the Prince awakened, there in bed beside him was a strange little boy. He had a pale, fretful face and looked very familiar. "Where can Orin be?" muttered the Prince, staring all around the room. At this the little boy stirred and slowly opened his eyes. "I've certainly seen him before!" thought the Prince. "Of course, you have!" Yawning and stretching his arms, the boy answered the Prince's unspoken thought. "But where's Orin?" The little Prince sat straight up in bed and looked at the cross little boy with great disfavor. "Simpleton, fetch me my clothes!" snapped the boy in a voice that the Prince just KNEW he had heard before. "Where's Orin?" The strange boy made a face. "If you want to see Orin—look in the glass—blockhead!"

Springing out of bed, the little Prince peered into the mirror and there, sure enough, was Orin. "But who are you?" he gasped, turning around. "I'm you, or, at least, I used to be you!" said the little boy with the fretful face, which so surprised the Prince that he could do nothing but stare. Why, sure enough, it was he—and that voice—why, of course, that was just the way he used to speak to the ser-

vants and to any one he happened to meet. And just as he had reached this discovery, the little boy or rather himself, disappeared and left him, or rather Orin, alone! Then out stepped the old wise man from behind the curtains. "Good-morrow, Prince!" said he. "Good-morrow, sir!" said Orin, or rather the Prince, politely. "That's it! That's it!" cried the wise man, delightedly. "Now everything will be all right!" Sitting down on the bed, he explained how every boy is two boys—the boy that he is and the boy that he COULD be, and how he had decided to give the little Prince the boy that he could be for a playmate. And then, of course, the little Prince explained how much he loved this little boy and begged the old wise man never to allow the little boy that he WAS to come back again—which the old man promised on the spot—and after that everything was delicious!



They took no one into their secret, but the old wise man went to the King and explained that the little Prince was cured, but that he must not be interfered with in any way and that anything he wanted he must have and anything he wanted any one to do he must do, else he would lapse into a hard-hearted old good for nothing—which so frightened the King that he agreed to do whatever the little Prince demanded.

And the first thing he demanded was that people should stop bobbing and bowing in the palace. He said it made him dizzy; so they stopped. And next, he invited his father to play ball, which the King, with many misgivings, did. But soon he became so interested in the game that he called for all the Prime Ministers and big-wigs to join in the game and they went scally-walloping all over the lawns like a party of wild Indians. OF COURSE, they were only doing it to keep the little Prince from lapsing into a hard-hearted old good for nothing—they were careful to explain this to the rest of the court.

The little Prince insisted upon playing croquet and checkers with his mother, the Queen, and that gentle dame grew so excited over the game that she insisted upon playing with the other Ladies of the court and all of them sighed less and laughed more. Indeed, with the Prince demanding first this and then that, they were kept upon the jump and had no time to talk about each other or sigh because they were not Kings and Queens. There were dances on the lawn and picnics in the woods and fishing parties on the river and fireworks and all manner of excitements. Gradually they forgot that the little Prince might lapse into a hard-hearted old good for nothing and did the things that he asked, because they wanted to do them, and in all the country roundabout there was not so delighted a company. Indeed, one would never have guessed that they were Kings, Queens, Dukes, Duchesses and such if they had not worn their silks and satins and crowns on Saturdays just for the looks of the thing. And that is all I know of the story!



Snip - Snap went the relentless shears ♪ ♪ ♪

THE BALD-HEADED KINGDOM

CHAPTER I.



HERE was once a King who had no hair; in fact, he was bald! But that was not all; he was bad tempered besides! With his high crown set atop his bald-headedness he sat upon his high throne in a most high dudgeon and made his poor subjects skip, I can tell you! They were continually dodging and ducking.

Just about the time of our story the Court Poet, with his hand pressed to his eye, was scribbling furiously with a gold pen. The Queen and her Ladies were whispering together in scared voices, while the Gentlemen, with one anxious eye upon the King and one foot well to the fore, were making ready to dodge at the slightest warning. "Well!" thundered the bad-tempered King at last, "is it finished?" "No, your Majesty—I mean, Yes, your Royal Highness!" stuttered the Poet, upsetting the inkwell in his flurry. "Well, read it then!" growled the King, leaning back and closing his eyes.

"Our Sovereign's head is like the sun,
Its brightness dims the eye."

read the Poet, then stopped, 'cause that was all he had written.

"Go on! Go on!" said the King, opening his eyes with a pleased expression, "Uh—uh—uh," floundered the Poet, trying to think of a word to rhyme with sun. "'Tis round and shiny like a bun!" he brought out triumphantly, "a play-

ground for the fly!" he finished with a rush. Then, hopelessly muddled, he gasped: "That is all, your Royal Baldness! Oh, dear! Oh, my dear! what have I done?"

At the word "baldness" the Ladies of the Court fell swooning in heaps to the marble floor while the Gentlemen dodged, ducked and scurried into the corners. "Baldness!" shrieked the King, dancing with rage. "Baldness!" and he tore off his pointy crown and flung it at the Poet's head. But the Poet was wildly tugging the great door open and out he fled, the King's sceptre and buckled shoes clattering after him. Having nothing left to throw, the King began stamping his stockinged feet and roaring, "Bun! Bun, indeed!"

After he had said everything possible—and more besides—he fell a-thinking. He thought and thought and thought. Then suddenly he began to chuckle and his little green eyes began to dance wickedly. "Fetch the Court Barber!" he shouted at the trembling pages. And when the Barber in obedience to the King's summons came waddling in he fairly roared with glee. Then he arose and wiping the tears of mirth from his little green eyes he commanded, "Let the Court Painter step forward."

"Ha!" said the King, fixing his eye upon the trembling Painter, "is my head not beautiful?"

"Yes—yes—certainly—yes!" stammered the painter.

"Would you not like to have one as beautiful?"

"Oh! Oh! No! I mean yes—oh, my hair—oh, my head! My career and my art!" wailed the Painter and fell over in a heap. "Do your work!" ordered the King. The Barber stepped forward importantly and tying a red towel round the Painter's neck began snipping off his long locks. As each one fell the Painter groaned and the King chuckled. Dears, it was terrible! When the snipping was over he lathered the poor fellow's crown and shaved off every single hair—ev-e-ry ONE. Think of that! "Beautiful!" exclaimed the King. "Bee-yutiful! Now pay the Barber, sir! One must pay well for such a favor."

CHAPTER II.

THE Painter turned out his pockets into the Barber's fat hands, then, covering his head with a pink silk handkerchief, rushed from the room sobbing, "Oh, my art! Oh, my career! Oh, my head and my hair. I shall have to be a shoemaker!"

Now, all the time the poor Painter was being shorn the Court Ladies had been giggling behind their handkerchiefs and the Court Gentlemen had been snickering behind their mustachios. They did not laugh long. Dear, no! One by one the bad-tempered King called them all forward. The Barber snipped and clipped and shaved the whole day without stopping, the Courtiers wept and pleaded and howled in vain, and the King only laughed the louder, till there was hair enough for ten royal mattresses and not a head of hair in the whole kingdom. Even the Queen, dears, and all of the Royal Ladies had bald, shivery, shiny heads. Ugh! how terrible!

And for a year and more not a single solitary hair was to be found upon a single solitary head in the kingdom. The king and the Barber saw to that. The Barber grew monstrously rich and insolent, and in all the lands to the east and the west, to the north and south, and in all the story books you have ever read there was never so gloomy and ridiculous a company as the poor subjects of this bald-headed, bad-tempered King.

But please do not think that this story is going to be entirely monopolized by him. Indeed, no. There is a simply gorgeous Princess in it, besides a most charming Prince.

You see, he had been far away for a year or more searching for the most beautiful Princess in the world, and that is the reason I have not mentioned him before. His name was Sambrun, and—and—the bad-tempered, bald-headed King was his father. One day, having found the simply gorgeous Princess, he came galloping home to prepare a great and glorious feast for his wedding. Singing a gay little song, about

the most gorgeous Princess, I fancy, he went clattering up the long road, his thick brown curls flying merrily out behind. His song ceased abruptly, for suddenly bald heads began to appear on all sides. They bobbed and bowed from the roadway, they nodded and beckoned to him from the palace windows. A whole company came rushing to meet him, and so dazzling was the sun reflected from their shining crowns that Sambrun grew dizzy and nearly tumbled from his horse. He rubbed his eyes and then looked again. Yes, there they were. Mercies! "What horrible calamity has overtaken us?" gasped the Prince, and—

CHAPTER III.

WITHOUT waiting to listen to their story, he leaped from his horse and dashed into the great hall. Within all was gloom, but at the sight of the Prince the Queen rushed from her throne and fell fainting at his feet.

"Welcome home," roared the King. "Are we not all beautiful, my son?"

Sambrun lifted the fainting Queen and looked about shudderingly.

"Horrible!" exclaimed the Prince, looking his father straight in the eye. "What does it mean, I pray, Sir?"

"Mean?" snapped the King, flying into a violent passion and next instant had the Prince seized by six strong guardsmen. The Queen wept and pleaded in vain, the King only laughed the more wickedly and the Barber, whose fingers had been itching with impatience, stepped up and snip, snap, went the relentless shears, and soon—soon—the most charming Prince was as bald as the baldest of them. "Well," demanded the King, "are we not beautiful?" but still Sambrun stubbornly shook his head.

"What—what!" roared the King, and sent his royal snuffbox flying at the Prince's head. Sambrun shrugged his shoulders and said, "No," louder than ever. Oh, he was a

brave Prince. Again the bad-tempered, bald-headed King fell a-thinking and this time his thoughts were blacker than ever, for he was really horribly jealous of his handsome son. At last he whispered to the chiefest of the Ministers and the poor fellow, with tears in his eyes, rose up to deliver the royal mandate. "Unless Prince Sambrun within the next thirty days discovers some means to restore the hair of his Royal Majesty, he shall upon the thirty-first day forfeit his head."

"Oh, oh," sobbed the Courtiers dismally, and pulling their silk handkerchiefs from their heads they all wept violently and the Queen outwept them all. But the most charming Prince merely bowed coldly to the King, kissed his royal mother and mounting his horse rode away.

He traveled far. In the countries to the east and west, in the countries to the north and south he sought, but vainly.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE evening of the twenty-fifth day, he came to a dim, dark forest, and sitting upon an old stump in a little patch of moonlight began to weep bitterly. You see, dears, he felt that death had already overtaken him, but all at once a sharp little voice cried, "What does this mean?" and up out of the ground popped a tiny brown dwarf. "What does this mean?" he shouted crossly. "I've not had a wink of sleep this night." Sambrun jumped up hastily and bowing in his most charming fashion, said how very sorry he was to have kept the little fellow from his sleep. Somewhat appeased, the dwarf raised his lantern and peered up curiously at Sambrun with his little red eyes. "Oh, ha—ha—ha," he roared, catching sight of Sambrun's bald head, "Oh, ho—ho—ho. This is worth a night's rest."

"Well, what's it all about, bald pate?" Sambrun knew enough about the fairy folk not to vex the dwarf; so with many sighs he told him of the wicked doings of his father, the bald-headed, bad-tempered King. The comical, crooked dwarf listened intently, his little red eyes snapping and

sparkling. When the Prince had finished, he said never a word, but, leaning down, gravely untied his shoe. Then, drawing it off, he jumped up quickly and threw it with all his might at the Prince's head. Sambrun had not time to dodge, and the little shoe hit him squarely in the eye. Everything grew black. He felt himself falling.

Down, down, he plunged through inky darkness, and landed at last with a dull thump. When he opened his eyes and looked about dizzily, he was in a great gloomy hall. Hundreds of tiny dwarfs were running excitedly about swinging red lanterns. Their eyes gleamed red and scarily and the lanterns sent thin streaks of light into the shadowy corners. Then up hopped the little dwarf who had thrown



the shoe and told the Prince to come with him. The Prince followed the little fellow to the end of the hall where a very ancient dwarf with a silvery beard at least a yard long sat upon a throne cut from a blazing ruby. Sambrun dropped to one knee and remained thus until the King of the dwarfs bade him rise. "Well," demanded the King in a faraway voice. "What is your wish? Here are stored the treasures of the world. Here are buried the secrets of all times, Past, Present and Future."

The Prince, now accustomed to the dim light, looked curiously about the giant hall. Heaps and heaps of silver and gold rose to the ceiling. Stacks of glittering emeralds and diamonds and all manner of precious stones glittered and sparkled from the shadowy corners; blue-veined marble, gold-shot bronze, magic-hued jade surrounded the walls of the mysterious cave. For a moment the Prince forgot the simply gorgeous Princess, forgot his weeping mother, and forgot his bald-headed, bad-tempered father. On the tip of his tongue trembled the wish to possess this great treasure, and then ashamed and mortified the next minute, he bit his tongue sharply and could say nothing at all. But the friendly little dwarf told his story for him, and as he finished said, "Give him, O wise King, the secret that will save his life, the secret sought since the beginning of time, the secret of growing hair."

The King looked at Sambrun gravely and asked, "Is this your wish?" "Yes," gasped the Prince, dropping to his knee and covering his eyes so that he could not see the hateful treasure. "You have wished well, O Prince," said the King.

CHAPTER V.

AND straightway he sent a score of little brown men scurrying this way and that. They built a huge fire and brewed in a golden kettle the strongest mixture that you can imagine. What was in it I can never tell you; indeed, I wish that I could. This only I know

—'twas green. It boiled and bubbled away merrily and now a hundred dwarfs, seizing tiny bellows, blew upon it until it was cool. Then into an emerald flask they poured the precious fluid and bore it to the King. Solemnly he handed the flask to the Prince. "One drop of this magic liquid will restore your father's hair. BUT BEWARE! If he use more than this he shall perish and the priceless secret with him."

Sambrun thanked the King and next instant found himself in the forest. The sun was high, and his horse ran up to him, neighing joyously. Slipping the precious flask into his bosom, the Prince sprang into the saddle and rode like the wind, for he had not a moment to spare. Day after day he maintained this break-neck pace. On the thirtieth day he came to his father's palace. Gaily he ran up the steps and hurried into the great hall.

Looking neither to the right nor to the left, Sambrun walked straight up to the King and held out the flask, saying, "Here, your Highness, is a magic fluid. One drop will restore your hair. Use more than that and you shall perish, you and the secret with you." All the Ladies and Gentlemen gasped and gaped with astonishment. The King, his hands trembling with eagerness, seized the emerald flask, and without so much as a thank you, he rushed into the garden and from the garden into the forest, for he wanted to be quite alone when he tried it. The Court Barber slipped out unnoticed and crept after him, armed with a heavy stick. He meant to steal the emerald flask, for greater than any King and richer than any man would be the possessor of the secret for growing hair. The King stopped breathlessly in a little open space, and, mopping his head excitedly, gazed greedily at the fluid. "One drop, one drop, indeed! The selfish fellow means to keep the rest for himself," he muttered. The Barber, with bulging eyes, watched from the thicket. He did not intend to steal the liquid until he was sure of its power. Now the King raised the flask, and, oh, my dears,

the greedy fellow poured the whole of the magic fluid over his head!

The Barber rushed out in dismay. Horrors!!! From the King's head a mass of hair shot into the air, jerking him from his feet. In a trice it had reached the treetops. Still it kept growing. It swept over the tops of the trees like a heavy cloud, and swirled down on all sides, closing the forest in darkest night. Still it kept growing. It twined and twirled around the wicked Barber, and round and round the wicked King, choking them to death. And still it kept growing, until the forest was a dense and impenetrable tangle into which no man has set foot from that day to this.

But in a year or more, when his hair had grown again, and all the heads in the kingdom were decently covered, the King Sambrun rode away into the Southland, and brought back the most gorgeous Princess. Together they ruled wisely and well, and bald heads were as rare as huckleberries in December. And that is the end of the story.





Suddenly trumpets sounded, there was a great commotion in the doorway.

THE TAILOR OF NEVERMINDWHERE



EVERMINDWHERE is a land lying so many miles east of Fancy and west of Facts, having a King, Queen, and all other public inconveniences including taxes. And ONCE—miles and miles ago—there came a tailor to Nevermindwhere. With such magnificence did he roll into the King's city that none would have taken him for a tailor had he not immediately sent his servant to inquire for a shop fit for sewing and such.

The King, thinking from the elegant carriage and liveried outriders that some mighty potentate was about to visit him, had set out to welcome the stranger, but hearing, just in time, of the sewing shop, ordered the royal coach to turn—which it did, with such abruptness that the Chief Prime Minister rolled into the dust.

Ah, 'twas ill luck to be a tailor in those days and a more down-trodden, meek-mannered despised lot of men were not to be found upon the face of the earth—'twas the fashion to despise 'em. Indeed there was a pretty little custom among the gentry of collecting unpaid tailor bills—some even went so far as to have them made into books with comical verses noted upon them. So you can imagine the indignation of the King.

And "Such airs!" sniffed the Princess of Nevermindwhere who was riding beside her father. "But is he not HANDSOME!" she murmured to herself. "A tailor, a rogue of a tailor!" fumed the King, "an arrogant knave who must be set in his place!"

Back to the castle whirled the King's coach in a bluster of indignation and a whirl of dust, neither of which escaped the stranger. He sneezed violently, but said nothing excepting, "SHE is the one!"

That evening after he had got him a cheery house and garden, with cozy stables for his horses and tidy lodgings for his servants and a long sunny parlor for his shop, he hung out his sign: "JERRY JAN—Tailor-man." Then, seating himself beneath it and tipping his chair against the wall, he began to sing—

"Thimbles and shears,
Beeswax and thread—
Oh a tailor's a failure
Who can't earn his bread!
Sing Ho for a tailor,
Sing Hey for his trade—
For the coats and the breeches
And men he has made!"

So fresh and clear was his voice, and so rollicking his song, that several folk who were passing stopped to listen. And a strange thing it was truly, a tailor singing, for if tailors did any singing or whistling in those days 'twas for their bills and naught else! The crowd increased and an elderly personage in a velvet cloak put on his spectacles and peered first up at the sign and then down at the merry lad who was trilling like a lark.

"Well, did one ever hear the like before!" laughed he in his cracked voice. "A TAILOR making a man! Ho ho—na ha! Know'st thou not, foolish one, that it takes NINE tailors to make a man!"

"Ho ho ha ha!" jeered the crowd. "Nine tailors to make a man!" "HAH!" quoth Jerry Jan. Down came his chair with a thump, and the crowd, which dearly loved a controversy, grew silent to see what would happen. For a moment

nothing happened. Then, in a voice so shrill that it fairly set one's teeth on edge, piped Jerry—

“It is the tailor makes the man—
And MAN that makes the tailor—
Just as the canvas makes the sail—
And sailing makes the sailor.”

Before they had recovered enough to close their mouths which had fallen open at such temerity in a tailor—Jerry rose and swept them a deep bow. “Good evening, Simpletons!” said Jerry, and turning his back upon them went into his shop and sat down.

“Well given, by my iron hammer!” roared a brawny blacksmith in the crowd. “That lad’s no spineless stitcher.” There was such laughing and joking among the common folks that the cloaked gentleman took himself off in a huff. As for Jerry he got out some work and sang more gaily than ever—

“Thimbles and shears—
Beeswax and thread—
Oh a tailor’s a failure
Who can’t make his bread!”

But scarce had he started the second verse before three figures stole into the shop. They whispered together for a minute, then the shortest and crookedest shuffled forward. “Sing ho for a tailor—sing ho for his trade! Ha—ha! good joke!” he wheezed scornfully.

“Best take thaself back from where tha came from!” croaked the second stepping forward. “Rob us of the bread we eat, would ye? With your fine shop and pert ways! We heard—we heard all about you!”

“A NICE mess you’ve made of it!” choked the third thrusting his head close to Jerry. “Like as not we’ll all go to prison for your impudence—like as not!” Whew, how they scolded, these crooked little men, their voices growing

shriller and shriller and Jerry Jan working away all the while, as calm as a hitching post in a storm. Well, when they had said all they could think of—Jerry yawned and stretched, then went and rang a bell. In bobbed a little serving maid. Without so much as a nod from her master she took the visitors' hats and shabby cloaks, drew up a table and in just no time at all had brought cake and wine and all manner of good things to eat.

"Ha—h!" chuckled Jerry, rubbing his hands, and next thing they were seated about the table chatting away as pleasantly as friends at a birthday feast. And not until the town clock struck ten, did Jerry refer to his guest's unpleasant entrance and only then to inquire the name of the fine gentleman whom he had offended. Immediately the three tailors grew fidgety. Exchanging uneasy glances they explained how they had come to warn him against the wrath of My Lord of Toppertush.

"Just as one man to another now, tha should'na have spoken so!" protested the second tailor shaking his head solemnly. "A TERRIBLE fellow, with power enough at court to make a man smart!" asserted the third. "Did'st see his velvet cloak?—the price has been owing me this twelve month—and now—now he'll never pay it!" whimpered the first, growing excited again. Whereupon Jerry lost his temper and harangued them fiercely for their cravenness. Yes—he had seen the cloak—and to his way of thinking his Lordship had more velvet on his back than on his tongue, which he'd a mind to tell him next time they met.

"Exalt your trade!" cried Jerry Jan. He shook his finger under their astonished noses—were they MEN, he would like to know—or mice. "Put starch in your collars and yardsticks down your backs and buckram in your knees if need be and ye'll pass for men yet!" Much shaken the three arose, much mystified and pondering upon these words they departed.

Meanwhile My Lord of Toppertush had returned to

Court tingling with resentment at what he was pleased to call a tailor's impudence. With eloquent little shrugs and raisings of the eyebrow he told his story, and the Court Ladies and Gentlemen, the King and Queen and the Princess, listened breathlessly, throwing up their hands in horror and emitting little cries of astonishment at the boldness of that wretched tailor. They talked of his arrival, his servants, his shop—indeed the evening was spent in discussion of him. And the curiosity of those who had not witnessed his arrival was aroused to such a pitch that they could scarcely contain themselves until morning.

So it happened that next day a perfect stream of silk and satin clad visitors passed in and out of the new tailor's shop. The street was so crowded with coaches, carriages, high stepping mounts, with grooms and footmen, that the tradesmen could not get through at all. Seated at a low table Jerry went on with his stitching, nodding pleasantly to his guests and choosing not to notice the rudeness of their remarks nor the impertinence of their stares. Suddenly trumpets sounded, there was a great commotion in the doorway and the KING—the King himself—had entered the shop. After him minced My Lord of Toppertush supporting the Princess. Immediately a hush fell upon the company, every one curtsying and stepping aside. Staring from left to right, and secretly much impressed by the magnificence of the shop, his Majesty approached. Jerry arose, and bowing—'though not too low—wished his Highness good morning!

Looking through Jerry as though he had been a window pane the King said he was minded to have a new cloak. "Well enough!" thought Jerry to himself, and scarce had the words left his Majesty's lips before he had whipped off his cloak, then his crown, pulled out his measure and had begun measuring away for dear life—jerking the King this way and that. And there stood the King, uncrowned and uncoated, just as he was, a rather fat old man, presenting such a comical appearance that several of the Courtiers

tittered openly, instantly recovering themselves however. Before his Majesty, fairly puffing with indignation, had time to speak; Jerry had finished, jotted the measurements in his book, whisked the King's robe about his shoulders, set the crown (a little to one side it must be admitted) upon his head, and was actually bowing the royal party toward the door.

The Princess' eyes grew round as saucers. She gasped, dropped her handkerchief, and tripped over her train. My Lord of Toppertush was purple with fury. Determined not to be outdone by the fellow's cleverness he pulled off his cloak and, with a glance of such hatred that 'tis a wonder Jerry did not crinkle up upon the spot, strode forward saying that



HE also would have a cloak. In less time and with even less ceremony Jerry took his measurements, snapped his book shut, gave a curt bow and returned to his stitching. The strange tailor had proved more curious even than they had imagined. With little clucks of astonishment, with whispers and shrugs, the Courtiers followed the royal party from the shop.

Now came a wonderfully busy season for Jerry Jan. From morning to night his shop was abustle. He and all his helpers worked away for dear life and still found it hard to keep up with the orders that came pouring in. Crooks, Stitchem and Rowley, the three other tailors of Never-



mindwhere, were kept hustling with orders passed over to them. For, you see, all the Courtiers following the King's example had come to be fitted out in new cloaks and breeches, and from the nods and winks and knowing glances they exchanged whenever they met, I cannot help thinking that all was not well.

Honest trade folk, attracted by Jerry's prices, came too; the blacksmith himself ordered a Sunday coat with iron buttons. The busier he grew, the cheerier waxed the new tailor of Nevermindwhere. Above the snipping and whirling in the shop rose his merry voice, and so popular did his songs become that they spread from one end of the Kingdom to the other.

"We need the merchants and the sailors,
But more than all we need the tailors!"

hummed the housewives over their work, and even the Courtiers whistled the air of "A tailor's a failure who can't earn his bread," 'though when it came to the King's ears 'twas promptly hushed up.

As for Crooks, Stitchem and Rowley, they were new men, copying Jerry in everything and acquiring a dignity that sat upon them as oddly as peacocks' tails upon hens. But WHY, considering the insolence of those wretched Courtiers, did Jerry when he was alone keep fingering a certain little handkerchief that he always carried next to his heart? And WHY, considering the insolence of that wretched tailor, did the Princess discover so many errands in the neighborhood of Jerry's shop?

Well, well—however that may be—it chanced that the King's cloak, My Lord of Toppertush's cloak, the breeches, vests, satin waistcoats, and such, ordered by the Courtiers, were finished upon the same day. Accordingly Jerry's footman buttoned up his purple coat, mounted the box of Jerry's handsome carriage, and drove off to the palace. Having delivered each gay box to its still gayer owner the

footman bowed, again mounted his box, folded the tails of his coat under and drove clippety-clop-clop-clop back again.

But hardly had he unharnessed the horses before a great procession began to wind into the street—why, one would have thought 'twas a pageant or a carnival day from its length and brilliance! The King's coach led off and after it came all the other court equipages. And surely something wonderfully comical had happened, for the silken-clad Ladies and Gentlemen lay back on their pillows, convulsed with merriment. The loud "Ha—ha's" and general confusion brought Jerry to the window and, seeing they were headed in his direction, he bade his footman open the doors, after which he returned to the blacksmith whom he chanced to be fitting.

What next occurred you will scarce believe but, upon my word, 'tis true. Tumbling from their carriages in most unroyal fashion the King and the Courtiers rushed into Jerry's shop each waving the pink bills they had received from Jerry. Knocking over chairs and jostling the workers they pushed forward, and at a signal from My Lord of Toppertush, who stood on a chair the better to be seen, each tore his pink bill into a thousand bits so that the pieces came fluttering down upon Jerry in a regular pink snow storm.

"Scissors and shears—
Ruffles and frills—
A fig for all tailors,
A fig for their bills!"

crackled old Toppertush delightedly, and before Jerry could raise a finger they had swept out of the shop.

But in almost no time Jerry had recovered and began calling orders in such a rate that everyone was on the jump to keep up with them. And all the while he was working he was saying over and over—"Did she come to mock me—or did she not? Did she come to mock me—or did she not?" And the Princess, who had gone as she declared to her Ladies, "to put that wretched tailor in his place," was walking up and down her golden salon wringing her hands.

"Oh, WHY did I go! Why did I go!" she moaned over and over. All of which is a pretty how-de-do, if I may be permitted to say so.

That night, when the Courtiers were sleeping soundly on their silken couches, a masked band crept through the palace, went tiptoeing through the halls and chambers, so lightly that not one wakened. Laden with many gay boxes the band made its way back to town. Jerry Jan was up even earlier than usual next day singing as merrily as ever as he stitched up the sleeves of the blacksmith's long coat. If the workers in the shop seemed nervous and exchanged anxious glances now and then, he appeared not to notice it, and when, without warning, six guardsmen appeared in the doorway he did not even look up.



"I arrest you in the name of the KING!" boomed the first guard striding in and placing a heavy hand on Jerry's shoulder. "Do you fetch those three other rascals!" he called over his shoulder, at which the five remaining guards disappeared, returning presently with Crooks, Stitchem and Rowley, and followed by the blacksmith waving his hammer menacingly, and by a crowd of Jerry's friends and neighbors. And now the first guard proceeded to read a long paper accusing Jerry of all crimes in general and of being a ROGUE OF A TAILOR—in particular, of stealing one hundred and seven fine garments, which were to be immediately returned—and hailing one Jerry Jan before the Grand Court of the Kingdom for trial.

Now according to the ancient laws of Nevermindwhere all prisoners were tried in the great stone court before the palace in the presence of all the people. By the time Jerry and the three other tailors had been thrust upon the little platform before the King, the Queen, the Princess and all the other high functionaires, the court was jammed. People stood upon the walls and climbed the trees in the garden beyond, for the story of the new tailor's misfortune had spread far and near. THUMP! went the hammer of the Lord High Accusationer and up he rose, pointing his skinny finger at Jerry. "Whereas," he wheezed, addressing the crowds, "one Jerry Jan has perpetrated villainy in every form, including insolence, arrogance, anarchy and robbery, he has been hailed before this court to answer for his crimes!"

My Lord of Toppertush who sat next to the King rubbed his hands and chuckled in anticipation, the Princess leaned forward to get a better view of that obstinate tailor, and several titters went up from the court as Jerry, none too gently, was shoved forward by the guards.

"When he is properly humbled I will visit him in prison," murmured the Princess to herself. "When she is properly humbled I will marry her," resolved Jerry with a sidelong glance in her direction. BUT—"What have you to say for

yourself?" roared the King at this juncture, and Jerry, bowing politely, turned to face his Majesty stating that as the goods had not been paid for they had not been stolen, which caused no end of merriment among the Courtiers. Half rising My Lord of Toppertush asked had one ever heard the like—a TAILOR expecting to be paid—"Why," said he, "a Tailor's bill is like a bird's, which no one can collect." "And like your own which no one would care to," chuckled Jerry, not in the slightest perturbed.

"Oh-ah-ah-ah!" roared the King covering his mouth, (Toppertush did have a nose though.) "Ha ha ha!" Then suddenly recollecting himself he started sternly at the prisoner. "Have you no respect for the crown?" he thundered—"For the crown and what it stands for!" As to that, said Jerry, he didn't see how it stood at all considering what was under it, which set the crowd in the court in such an uproar of laughter that it took all the guards to restore order. And before the King had recovered from his astonishment Jerry snapped his scissors in the air declaring he was a King of his trade, a King and a Maker of Kings. "Why, there's as much power in a pair of shears as in a sceptre," quoth Jerry, "seeing that everything depends on the cut of a man's coat." Tilting his head on one side he caroled—

"Would you know a KING
Without his crown?
A Lord High Judge
Without his gown?"

"I'd know you anywhere for a low sneaking tailor," screeched My Lord of Toppertush bouncing to his feet.

"I demand my rights as a man," cried Jerry paying no attention to this. "But you're NOT a man; you're a TAILOR!" jeered his Majesty, still smarting from Jerry's pun—"A tailor!" "Both," cried Jerry waving his shears. "A Man and a Tailor and a tailor is more than a man—he is the maker of men I tell you!—as important as a Doctor, a

lawyer, a merchant, an artist, a very King—for he is the maker of them all!” “Nonsense!” blustered the King.

“Treason, murder and anarchy!” screamed the Court Accusationer pale with fury. “Reason, justice and honesty!” cried Jerry defiantly. And what with the Courtiers crying this and that and the populace below cheering and stamping there was almost a riot. So at a word from his Highness, Jerry and the three other tailors who had stood shivering by were seized by the guards and dragged away to prison. At first the crowds were for interfering, but a wink from Jerry settled that; so instead they fell in behind. A trumpeter and drummer, special friends of Jerry’s, forthwith set up such a tooting and banging that ’twas more like a triumphal procession than a hanging (which the guards hinted darkly ’twould come to yet).

But as his Majesty remarked shrewdly to his advisors, “’twould be a waste to hang so great a rogue and so good a tailor.” “A taste of prison will show him what’s what,” declared the King, taking a pinch of snuff. But in prison Jerry sang as gaily as a bird in a cage and was so agreeable that the turnkey and keeper of the jail could not bring themselves to be rough with him. He said the fare was excellent and the service quite satisfactory, and was so bubbling over with songs and jokes that the whole place took on a festive air. Even Crooks, Stitchem and Rowley bore up under their trials. The trumpeter and drummer marched every day to the prison and gave a concert beneath Jerry’s window, and the good wives of his friends fairly showered him with delicacies, which, as he divided them with the jailors, they were in no hurry to mention to the officials.

And just about this time the Princess took to visiting a one-legged robber in the cell next to Jerry’s. What delicate attentions she lavished upon the old rogue. Books and flowers and fruit appeared and the Princess read to him for hours at a time, paying of course no attention to “that wretched tailor” in the next cell. And about this time Jerry

called for a needle and shears, a thimble and some thread, "for," quoth he, "'tis a real crime to be idle." 'Twould please him therefore to undertake such tailoring as the officials of the prison might desire. The keeper of the prison, remarking to himself that there could be no harm in this and with an eye to his own interest, ordered Jerry's materials fetched, keeping a still tongue about the matter. Thus several months slipped past and away, Jerry working so steadily that soon every jailor and official in the prison had a new turn-out. And what turnouts they were! As Jerry had furnished the material, and as they had naught to say about the style, he had fashioned them after ideas of his own.

One holiday—the King's birthday it was—when all but a few of the prison officials were off for the festivities in their new suits, the crowds awaiting the arrival of the royal party were astounded to see the King and Judges and other big-wigs strolling carelessly down the street. "The KING!" cried the little boys—"There goes the KING." Straight way the crowd fell in behind with cheers and birthday wishes. The little girls strewed their roses, and the Lord Mayor burst forthwith into his birthday-speech with many brave gestures. But horrors! After the last straggler had disappeared 'round the corner came another King! THEN—where was the speech of welcome—the cheering crowds—the flowers and the populace? Where indeed? Why, gone after the warden of the prison, the turnkeys and other officials, who, decked out in court attire by mischievous Jerry, might have fooled wiser men than they. And what could the King say—had he not scouted the notion of clothes making the man? Well, well! 'Twas easily remedied, the fellow should be released, for HE, the King, needed some new clothes.

So next day Jerry and the three other tailors were set at liberty, and shortly the King appeared to order a robe. But, hoity-toity, here was another how-de-do, for Jerry and the three other tailors said they were minded not to work for



About this time Jerry called for a needle and shears,
a thimble and some thread ? ? ? ?

the King or any of his court. And when the King attempted to send Jerry back to prison such a howl went up from the people that he shook in his buckled shoes and decided that he'd best ignore the "impudent rascal." So posthaste a messenger was dispatched to the neighboring Kingdom of Dingby Dumph and in a fortnight returned, his horse in a lather and with a thin wisp of a man jouncing up and down behind him. But they got no farther than the blacksmith's, for that worthy catching sight of a tape measure round the fellow's neck pulled both down and administered such a drubbing to the strange tailor that, once released, he sprang upon the horse and was off at a gallop.

And so were all the tailors the King smuggled into the Kingdom served. The whole populace stood shoulder to shoulder behind Jerry. They hustled the guards about roundly, and set a watch upon the borders of the Kingdom so that none could leave nor enter without their consent. And, worse still, the butchers and burghers and other trades-folk began to go about their affairs dressed in Jerry's velvets and satins, until there was no telling the notables from the nobodys and there were so many in Judges' gowns and Courtiers' cloaks that one knew not when to bow; so ended by bowing not at all—indeed the Kingdom seemed suddenly gone quite mad.

The King, at his wits' end, could do nothing to remedy matters, for at the slightest hint of harm to this wretched tailor the whole populace would advance upon the castle, ready for a revolution if need be. So the King fumed and the Courtiers sulked and the Princess said she was VERY angry with that wicked tailor. As time went on the Courtiers grew shabbier and shabbier, while the common folk were fine as peacocks, for Jerry's prices were so low that anyone could afford a silk robe and flowered waistcoats. The court Ladies did their best to keep their Lords in trim, and several of the nobility tried their hand at tailoring, but with such comical results that the common folk tee-heed when they passed.

“It takes nine tailors to make a man,
The song grows stale and staler;
For how many men—aye, how many men—
Will it take to make a tailor?”

chortled the mischievous street boys at every opportunity.

At the end of two years times were dismal indeed. The royal Ladies got out their needles in earnest and, with puckered brows and pricked fingers, settled down to serious tailoring. What odd looking costumes the poor Ladies achieved and what sour looking nobles were in them! Small wonder for often they ripped up if one sat down too suddenly.

And Jerry, shameless fellow, sent the Princess a gold thimble—a thimble mind you!—which she would have done well to return, all things considered. But no—she must needs throw it out of the window and spend the rest of the day searching for it, and when ’twas found set it gravely upon her thumb and do remarkable things with a needle and thread upon her royal parent’s court robe. She said she was sewing. And the thimble was followed by the tiniest gold shears imaginable and a little gold work-box fitted out with tiny spools with every color silk one could think of, all of which this perverse young Princess set upon her dressing table. Just WHY—I cannot imagine—can you?

Not only were the poor Courtiers shabby—they were LOST—for, thanks to Jerry, the common-folk dressed so richly and royally that strangers invariably did business with the wrong parties, and ended by declaring the whole Kingdom QUITE, QUITE MAD. Which was quite, quite true. My Lord of Toppertush stole about wrapped in a faded blue cloak, vowing to kill that Jerry Jan, but never in Jerry’s hearing. The blacksmith strode blithely through the town clad in a royal green hunting suit, and not a few eyes followed him, mark you. For the royal maidens began to cast kindly glances upon the richly clad burghers’ sons, quite ignoring the shabby Dukes and Lords. Was there ever such a topsy-turvy Kingdom as Nevermindwhere, I wonder!

And right into the midst of this topsy-turviness dropped the thunderbolt. At least the King said it was a thunderbolt and I quite agree with his Majesty, for if an announcement that King Cedric of Torrens, the wealthiest realm for leagues about, will in ten days visit the court with the intention of marrying one's daughter, is not a thunderbolt then I know nothing about them. The King chuckled and rubbed his hands, then stamped and tore his hair, for how was he to explain that his Kingdom was being run by a rogue of a tailor, and how was he to explain his shabby court. And when he told the Princess of her good fortune the obstinate young good-for-nothing cried, which so provoked his Highness that he boxed her ears soundly and then strode furiously up and down his marble hall. And after a precious day had been wasted thus the King decided that something **MUST** be done and, 'though every word hurt his pride, he penned a note to Jerry Jan requesting him to come to the palace.

Looking wonderfully hearty and handsome Jerry arrived that evening and listened most courteously to the King's explanations about King Cedric and how important it was for them all to make a good impression, what with his daughter getting on in years (she being all of nineteen), she would not have such an opportunity again. "Your Majesty said clothes were nonsense and had naught to do with making a man," observed Jerry mischievously, continuing, with a sidelong glance at the Princess, that for his part he didn't want to be the means of depriving her of a husband, that he'd once had the notion of marrying her himself, an ill-favored lass though she was, who could neither sew, bake, nor yet darn a man's sock—but that he'd changed his mind, and if the King would agree to his terms they might strike a bargain."

And a strange bargain it was that they made: the King on his part to send the Princess to Jerry's shop, he being short of hands, and as his Majesty had plainly shown his belief that clothes counted nothing, he was to have the two Ladies-in-Waiting dressed in the same manner as the Princess, for

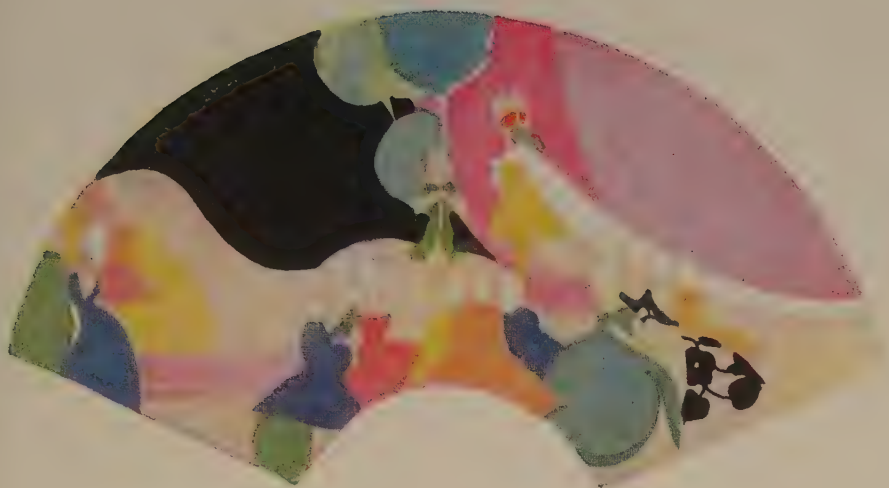


certainly King Cedric would choose correctly; Jerry on his part was to outfit the court suitably and persuade his friends and neighbors to dress in their usual fashion. So they parted and great preparations were immediately plunged into both at shop and castle.

Every morning the Princess and her maid went down to Jerry's shop and he kept her busy, I want to assure you. What with running errands, ripping out bastings, holding brocade to be cut, she had not a minute to breathe and, whew! how he scolded, for her Highness kept dropping the scissors and forgetting orders. And the more he stormed and stamped the more—well, the more she kept forgetting.

But at last the ten days were got through with. The Courtiers, clad more elegantly than ever before, were drawn up in style to welcome King Cedric, Jerry dressed as fine as any among them. And with what a blowing of trumpets and fluttering of pennants and prancing of white steeds the King clattered into Nevermindwhere. And one could not deny but that he was handsome, 'though there were some who declared his nose a trifle large and his eyes a trifle small. King Cedric himself was duly impressed by the magnificence of his reception, but plainly impatient to see the Princess. So there was a word to a page, a little rustle of expectation, and down the golden steps swept her Highness with her two attendants. That the three were dressed exactly alike the King seemed to notice not at all. Striding forward he took the hand—the hand of—great swords and bucklers! the hand of the first Lady-in-Waiting! !

The King sprang forward with an exclamation of dismay, but Jerry gripped him by the arm and, whispering fiercely that he was to keep his bargain, drew him back. Out of the tail of his eye Jerry watched the Princess. Up went her hand to her heart, and with such an expression of relief that he was at some pains to keep from bounding into the air for joy. Pshaw, I believe the rascally fellow has been in love with her all along. As for King Cedric, so infatuated was he with his supposed Princess that he was aware of nothing amiss and naught would do but that they be married upon the spot and she accompany him straightway to his palace. The Lady-in-Waiting smiled and blushed and said for her part she was quite willing. So within an hour the whole thing was at an end, the wedding over, the King and his bride departed, the horrified court retired to discuss the calamity, the King sunk groaning on his throne like a man with the gout, Jerry staring out one window and the Princess out another. But one could not stare out a window forever and, first making sure that the King was quite occupied with his groaning, Jerry approached the Princess.



He was sorry, he said, that things had gone so badly, he was sorry to have her so cut up about matters, and if she could ever forgive a rough, rude fellow like himself, he would try to make amends. And the Princess, assuring herself first that the King was still groaning, looked up with a merry twinkle "that if cutting was in a tailor's line so also was MENDING." And the merry twinkle kindled into something so very much kinder that Jerry—well, Jerry set about making amends at once, 'though not with a needle, I might mention. And how long the mending would have lasted I have no idea, had not the King stopped groaning. Whizz, Whirr—went something through the air and the two dodged, his Majesty's crown, just in time. That seemed to bring the Princess to her senses. Walking proudly up to the King she announced crisply that she was minded to wed this tailor man, he being to her way of thinking a VERY KING. If his Majesty had groaned before, he fairly roared now. What was the use of being a King he would like to know, with an upstart tailor running his Kingdom and marrying his daughter. What good were Kings anyway!

"Just what I thought myself a while back," said Jerry, taking his place beside the Princess, at the same time giving

a loud whistle which had no sooner died away than a hundred feet clattered in the hall-way. Next minute in hurried a company of Lords and Ladies, an attendant in green rushed up and wrapped an ermine cloak about Jerry's shoulders and another set a crown upon his head. "His Majesty, King Cedric of Torrens," announced a page in gold lace.

At the excitement all the Courtiers of Nevermindwhere came flocking back. "What's this? Who's that? What's it all about?" they whispered in agitated voices, then all grew quiet, for the new King and their old tailor was speaking. "Your Majesty," said Jerry with a low bow to the King, "three years ago I entered your Kingdom with the intention of marrying your daughter. Expecting to spend some months in Nevermindwhere, I brought my tailor along and had no sooner arrived than I inquired for a shop suitable for the fellow. Your reception and your insolent treatment of one whom you believed to be a tailor decided my course of action. I determined to see that justice was done all tailors and, having some knowledge of cutting and with the valuable assistance of my own tailor, succeeded as you well know. The Princess alone was able to rise above prejudice and, in consenting to marry the unknown tailor of Nevermindwhere, has made me the happiest man alive."

"But King Cedric!" gasped the Lord Chief Justice. The King was too stupefied to utter a syllable. "My brother Roland," explained Jerry. Of course from time to time I communicated to him the results of my experiment, and he, also, believing that clothes were naught, swore he could pick out a real Princess no matter how she were clad, and as to that, what a joke I have played upon him!"

Well, well, did one ever hear the like? The news spread from one end of the town to the other and soon the court was crowded with Jerry's old friends and neighbors. The blacksmith strode right into the court-room and smote him a resounding thwack between the shoulders—then raising his lusty voice roared—

“Thimbles and shears—
Beeswax and thread—
A tailor’s a failure
Who can’t earn his bread.
Sing ho for a tailor,
Sing hey for his trade;
For the coats and the breeches
And men he has made,”

the whole company joining in with a will. And all of them were invited to the wedding—nay they had preference over the Courtiers—even Crooks, Stitchem and Rowley—and if ever there was a finer feast, a happier groom or a lovelier bride, then I’ve never heard of them, that’s all. And this was the beginning of better times for tailors in Nevermind-where—and Everywhere, for that matter.





Other days he would wade out into the sea, standing
stiff and tall as a lighthouse † † †

THE LAST GIANT



ONCE upon a time there was a last Giant. How he escaped Jack the Giant Killer I have no idea, have you? But escape he did, that is certain. Oh, but he had a wretched life of it. 'Twas simply dreadful! 'Tis always dreadful being the last of anything. You see he had no one to walk with, or talk with, or to stay with or play with. Why, his huge giant heart was cracking with loneliness. Besides, Jack the Giant Killer's grand-nephews and nieces were continually on the lookout for him. All day he was forced to hide, and 'tis no easy task when one is as big as all outdoors.

Sometimes he stood in his dingy brown suit with his shaggy hair tumbled over his face, his two arms crooked like branches, pretending to be a tree. He did make a tremendously tall one, but it was mighty tiresome work being a tree, and the mischievous little birds would peck his nose, and tweak his ears and pull out his hair, for they knew he did not dare to cry out or shake them off because Sarah Ann Giant Killer was sure to be on hand with her spy glass and giant-killing hat pin. Other days he would wade out into the sea, standing stiff and tall as a lighthouse, but even here the crabs would pinch his heels and the other sea folk would steal his shoe buttons, and stick and prick him spitefully. If he rolled up on the ground to look like a brown hill, along would come the owner of the field and a score of workmen to shovel and pick-axe him out of the way, or blow him to bits with dynamite. It was all very unpleasant for the last Giant.

But at night time, after the giant-killing nephews and nieces were in bed (they retire very early), Tonto would fare forth boldly, striding over the hills and hollows till he came to a great city; then, leaning over, until his giant back ached, he would peer in through the lighted windows at the old people gathered round the fires, and at the young ones dancing and singing, and the tears of loneliness would trickle off his nose and his gigantic heart would crinkle up like a persimmon for very sadness. When he could bear it no longer, he would snatch a dozen or more sheets from the yards, where the good dames had hung them to dry, and muffling his face in these stolen handkerchiefs would weep bitterly.

His gusty sighs often blew the roofs from the houses, and his tears fell in showers so that the people next day would shake their heads over the night's storm. On his way through the narrow streets he was constantly brushing off shutters and stumbling over lamp posts, catching his heels in park gates and fences. I hate to think that the small boys were blamed for much of this damage. He had many narrow escapes, but always managed to turn himself into a church steeple or an arch, before he was discovered.

So things went on and on in this fashion for a great while, 'til he had wandered in every city of the world excepting one. On the night that he came to the last city it happened,—yes siree, it happened then. Now this city chanced to be the King's city, and Tonto, in search of amusement, had gone directly to the stately palace. With his eye plastered tightly against one of the long windows he gazed enviously at the brilliant scene within. The King, who was fat and jolly, sat upon his golden throne tapping his foot to the fascinating tune of the royal fiddles. The Court Gentlemen were bobbing and bouncing about in tight breeches and lace coats, and the Ladies in cob-webby gowns and buckled slippers,—the Ladies, mind you, were bobbing and bouncing too. In fact I think that they must have been

dancing. Periwigged lackies rushed hither and thither, with frosted cake and tinkling tumblers of pink lemonade, and altogether they were having a delightful time of it.

Then the music stopped, and all heads turned toward the marble stairway. "Here she comes! the Princess! the Princess!" whispered one and then another. "Ah-h-h." Down the steps tripped the merriest, plumpest, rosiest, little dimpled Princess you can imagine. Smiling a plump little dimpled smile, she bustled up to the King, a pair of red worsted slippers in one hand and a snuff box in the other. "Charm-



ing, charming," murmured the Court Gentlemen, twirling their mustachios and rolling their eyes. The King, beaming with pride and affection, drew on the red worsted slippers, took a deep pinch of snuff and sank back with a grunt of pure happiness, while the Princess smoothed his forehead. "Such devotion!" exclaimed the Court Ladies, clasping their hands together in an ecstasy of emotion. The Gentlemen all sighed mightily, and each wished himself in the King's red slippers.

Closer and closer Tonto had pressed his eye to the window, and when he had beheld the charming Princess descending the stair, then—then it happened. Sweethearts, he fell—not down, nor up—nor out, but in—in love with the King's daughter. Think of it! His heart began to hammer away like forty steam engines, 'til it actually shook the palace, and the Courtiers began anxiously to consult the newspapers to see whether there was going to be an earthquake. As no earthquakes were mentioned, they dismissed the matter from their minds, and fell to dancing again. But Tonto looked, and looked, and looked, and the longer he looked, the more he loved the dimpled little Princess, and to tell the truth she was exactly the size of his heart, just a comfortable heartfelt I should say.

He could not bear to tear himself away from her, and he remained with his eye glued to the window till the Courtiers went yawning off to bed, then he took to his giant heels and never stopped running till morning, for he felt strangely hilarious. Instead of hiding he walked about with his head in the air as if there were no Giant Killer nieces and nephews in the world. He could think of naught but the Princess, and his love, as you can well imagine, was a very gigantic thing.

He could scarcely wait for the next evening, so anxious was he to see the Princess again. And when it did come, at last, he set off at top speed for the palace.

Again he glued his giant eye to the window and looked and looked. Things were even more lively than on the

previous evening. The Court Ladies and Gentlemen were bobbing and ducking about in a mad and merry dance. The fiddlers were wildly sawing the air with their bows as they played a jiggeldy jig. The King, in a pair of violet worsted slippers, beamed upon the assemblage, his snuff box on one side and his dimpled daughter on the other. It was all that Tonto could do to keep from reaching in the window and snatching the Princess. But he loved her too deeply to frighten her. Then suddenly the King, taking an unusually large pinch of snuff, arose, and the Court Ladies and Gentlemen stopped bobbing and bowing straightway to hear the royal mandate.

Now he took off his royal spectacles and, folding his hands upon his ample stomach, began, "My honored subjects, it pleases me to inform you that every Lord of the realm wishes to marry my daughter." Here all the hundred or more Lords of the realm adjusted their monocles and glared at each other haughtily. "This is er—flattering, and er—embarrassing," continued the King, at which the Princess clicked her heels together and dutifully nodded her head. "Loving you all so well," chuckled the King, with a mischievous wink, "we find it impossible to choose among you. So I have decided that the man who proves himself capable of handling my daughter's fortune shall have my daughter herself."

Hereat each Lord straightened his crown and complacently smoothed down his shirt front, for each felt quite sure of winning the Princess. But Tonto, standing without, at the mere thought of her marrying any one of them groaned a giant groan. "Oooohhh," shuddered the Lords of the realm shaking till their golden crowns fell clattering to the floor. "What was that?" faltered the King, as the horrid sound died away. "'Twas the wind singing to the chimney," quoth the secretary promptly and with a low bow. "His song is most unpleasant," said the King rubbing his head, "pray bid him cease," and off went the secretary to argue with the wind.

"Now," said the King, having disposed of the affair, "let us see who shall marry my daughter." So saying he banged loudly with his golden sceptre upon the marble floor. Into the room came a hundred black slaves staggering under the weight of a huge iron chest. Slowly and painfully they set it down before the throne and retired backwards from the room. The eyes of the hundred Lords fastened upon it greedily. They began shoving and pushing each other rudely to get a better view. "Well," said the King, "will the Lord who thinks that he can handle my daughter's fortune kindly step forward." At this the whole hundred or more of them made a spirited dash for the chest, tumbling over one another's shins and landing in a confused heap at the Princess's feet. "Ho, ho!" roared the King, "one at a time, one at a time, if



you please." Forthwith the Lords of the realm untangled their shins and arranged themselves in a long line according to their rank.

Then the first one strode up to the chest. "Remember," warned the King, "I said the man who could *handle* my daughter's fortune, and I mean exactly what I say." The first Lord looked rather puzzled, in fact he did not know just what was expected of him. Slowly he drew off his gloves and fumbled with his watch chain. "Well," smiled the King, "why don't you begin. Can you handle my daughter's fortune or not. Come, be quick. There is the ring." The Lord put in his monocle and looked at the huge chest. Sure enough, in the lid was a stout iron ring. "Handle your daughter's fortune," mused he, stroking his chin, "errrr—er—surely your Majesty cannot mean that I, er—lift that chest?" "What else could I mean?" blustered the King, pretending to look greatly surprised.

At this the other Lords of the realm got out their silk pocket-handkerchiefs and began mopping their heads nervously, while the first Lord, taking off his lace jacket, set his jeweled crown carefully on top of it, and stepped up to the chest. Seizing the iron ring he tugged away mightily till his lordly face was a royal turkey-cock purple, but not an inch could he budge it. The King shook his head sadly, "I see very plainly that you are not the man," quoth he. One after another the greedy Lords tried to lift the chest, while the Princess sat by demurely. But puff and pull and tug and strain as they might the chest never stirred.

Imagine how exciting this all was to the last Giant, peering in through the window! And as each lord took himself sulkily off, the smile upon the King's broad face grew broader. The truth of the matter was he did not want his daughter to marry at all, and we cannot much blame him for that. Each day she crocheted him a new pair of slippers, and mixed his snuff by a wonderfully secret recipe known only to herself. He had a whole castle turned solely over to the

accommodation of his slippers, and so accustomed had he grown to the Princess's delicate attentions that life without her and them seemed intolerable. He therefore arose, and chuckling till his double chins quivered and danced with merriment called loudly, "What, is there no man who can handle my daughter's fortune?" Sweethearts, he was sure that his trick had been successful and that his daughter would go on crocheting him slippers to the end of his days.

But it never does to be too sure. Goodness, no!!! For scarcely had the King finished speaking before a thundering knock shook the palace, and the next instant a giant hand came splintering through the wall, reached down, seized the iron ring and lifted the huge chest into the air as lightly as though it were a match box. Up, up, up before the terrified eyes of the Courtiers went the Princess's fortune, and the chest and the hand were withdrawn through the yawning hole in the wall. "In one month I will return for your daughter," roared the giant voice of Tonto. At this the excitement was terrific. The King fell flat upon his back. The Princess fell prone upon her face—prone, flat and slantwise tumbled everyone!

But Tonto, with the chest upon his back, hurried off to the deep woods and buried the chest under an oak tree, then, standing beside the oak tree, pretending to be its cousin, he thought and thought and thought how he could marry the Princess. For ten whole days and nights he thought and, at the end of the tenth night, he had come to the conclusion that he could only marry her by ceasing to be a giant. For nineteen days more he pondered upon this puzzling question, but on the night of the nineteenth day he strode quickly over the hills and dales until he had come down to the sea. He waded in, and when the water rose higher than his head he began swimming with all his might. On and on he plowed, faster than the fastest steamboat in the world till he came to the very centre of the sea.

In the centre of the sea, you know, is a tiny island where

the last witch in the world with her forty cats lives safe from the heartless witch-burning folks of today. When Tonto reached this island, he raised his giant head out of the water and called, "Come out, good mother, I beg," and the witch who had not had a visitor for one hundred years, stuck her black head out of her little hut to see what it all might mean. Tonto in great excitement began to tell her all about the dimpled Princess, but so lusty was his voice that at the first word the little old woman was blown into the sea. Now a witch likes water just about as much as a cat, and when Tonto set her on dry land again she scolded him roundly. Swimming off a few strokes he began in his gentlest giant voice all over again, ending with the statement that he no longer wished to be a giant.

Then the old witch began shaking her head from side to side and pulling her hat down over her nose, which is the way all witches think, I am told. Finally she called shrilly, "It can be done, it can be done!! But what will you give me," and coming down to the water's edge she fixed her red eyes greedily on the last giant. "Anything—anything at all," whispered Tonto, for fear of blowing her away again. "A lock of your hair," screamed the witch, "a lock of your hair," and hobbling into the hut she returned with a pair of witch's shears.

Tonto swam close to the shore and she cut off one of his curly locks, and croaking with joy hobbled back to her hut. She was going to make herself a switch, I fancy. Soon from the chimney of the house smoke began to curl upward and the forty cats set up a terrible howling and yowling. Soon after this the witch came down to Tonto and handed him a huge green sponge. "When you come to the shore," said she, "swallow this sponge. You will immediately shrink. But let me warn you that while it will shrink your body it cannot shrink your gigantic strength nor your gigantic temper. The first time that you lose your temper you will shoot up into a giant; so beware!"



Tonto took the evil-looking sponge, thanked the old witch, and swam joyfully back to land. The witch's warning did not bother him in the least, for he did not see how he could possibly lose his temper when he had married the Princess. The next night he dug up the treasure chest, and then—then he swallowed the witch's sponge. Ugh!! what a bitter mouthful! Bah! it nearly choked him. No sooner had he swallowed it than he began to shrink. Shorter and shorter and thinner and thinner he grew, 'til he was just exactly the right size for a princess to fall in love with. I tell you he was a handsome fellow, but not stopping to think of such a small matter as his looks he took the huge chest upon his back (he still had the strength of the giant, remember), and started on a run for the King's city.

When he arrived at the palace carrying the terrible load unconcernedly upon his back, the Courtiers gasped and

stared with astonishment, but the King pulled out his violet silk handkerchief and wept kingly tears upon it. The King's word is a King's word, however; so he handed his daughter over to Tonto, and they were married upon the spot, with splendor and magnificence. Next day the two went to housekeeping with a great many silver teaspoons and coffee pots, and the Princess immediately began crocheting her husband a pair of green worsted slippers.

That was the beginning of the trouble, for Tonto was color blind,—most giants are. When the dimpled Princess presented him with the slippers he said, "Ah, my dear little wife, what beautiful blue slippers."

"They are green, my love," said the Princess softly. "I think not, my dear," said Tonto gently but firmly, "they are blue."

"Green," said the Princess a little more firmly still. "Blue," said Tonto.

"Green," said the Princess. "I say that they are blue," said Tonto sullenly.

"I say they are green," cried the Princess stamping her foot. "Blue," "Green," "Blue," "Green," they shouted at each other till they both grew as hoarse as crows. It was disgraceful!

Next a frightful thing happened. Looking at Tonto, the Princess saw that his eyes were as large as saucers. Now his mouth began to widen. Now his head began to swell and swell until it almost filled the room. Shrieking with terror the Princess flung herself out of the window. Just in time, too, for the next minute Tonto shot up into a giant again, and the house, with all the silver teaspoons and coffee pots, hung round his neck like a dog collar. Off rushed the Princess to her father's palace, and the last I heard of her she had just begun work on the thirty-nine thousand three hundred and forty-third pair of worsted slippers. They were blue.



And out of the laughter stepped the most beautiful fairy
that you can imagine ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

THE PRINCESS WHO COULD NOT DANCE



H, once—oh, once, dears and ducks, there was a beautiful Princess who could not dance! Think of it! All the dancing masters in the kingdom and in all the kingdoms for miles round could do nothing with her. They came singly and doubly and then all together, and counted one, two, one, two, three, and twirled, and bobbed, and bowed, and stamped, and swayed in and out, and whirled round like tops; and the Court Musicians twanged and banged and thumped, tum-tum, tiddy-um-tum, tum-tum, tiddy-um-tum, until their ruffled collars wilted, and their cheeks puffed out like red balloons,—but still she couldn't dance.

The King tore his hair out by the handful—he didn't have much either; and the Queen wept into her flowered handkerchief, while the dancing masters explained this and then that, but the Princess sadly shook her head instead of her foot, and there was an end of it. So in all the land there could be no dancing, no Court balls or frolics, nor any music even, because music made the other folks dance and the Princess appear ridiculous.

And oh, my dears, that kingdom grew pokier than snuff! Faces grew long and dour, and visitors to the realm most mighty scarce. And yet this Princess was really bewitchingly enchanting, her hair all tumbling golden curls, and her eyes, sweethearts, as blue as the darkest part of the sky, and her cheeks as pink as the little clouds at sunset, while her feet and hands were the tiniest ever. Oh, you would

have loved her to pieces! Even her name was a dancy sort of name, for it was Dianidra.

Well, poor Dianidra grew every day more thin and sad, because all the Court Ladies who could dance were exceedingly unkind to her. I shouldn't be surprised if they pinched her now and then. And the King was so vexed that a real Princess couldn't dance, that quite often he boxed her ears. Oh, he was a crab of a King! When Dianidra went near her mother, the Queen covered her face with her handkerchief and shrieked for her smelling-salts, and moaned: "A Princess who cannot dance will never marry. How disgraceful! How terrible! Unhappy me!" and a good bit more that I have not time to tell you.

So Dianidra used to wander off into the garden by herself and try to puzzle it out. She used to work it out with a paper and pencil like this: 2 steps plus 2 steps, and 1 bow plus 1 dip = the minuet. And 4 times 3 steps plus 1 turn, and 2 swings plus 1 slide = the Court glide. Then—then, because she never could put the puzzle together, she would throw herself down on the ground and weep, until the flowers thought surely that spring had come. And, dear hearts, have you guessed why? Don't think she was bewitched. Not a bit. Let me tell you the way of it. The proud old King and the weepy old Queen and the stupid old dancing-masters had been so busy telling the Princess how to dance that they all completely forgot to tell her what dancing was. So Dianidra had it all mixed up with her arithmetic and spelling lessons. And of course she couldn't dance, because the wisest person in the world couldn't dance with his head.

Things grew worse and worse, and pretty bad, I can tell you. And one day, after the King had been unusually crab-bish, and the Queen most awfully weepish, and the Court Ladies outrageously crossish, Dianidra decided to run away. She waited until the gate-keeper was snoring, then she stood on her tippy-toes, turned the great golden key, and slipped out into the world. She ran and ran, down the King's

highway, of course, crying all the time so hard that she couldn't see where she was going. And first thing you know, plump-p-p! bump-p-p! she had run into an old lady and tumbled her head over heels in the road.

"Sugar and molasses, my dear!" cried the old lady pleasantly. "I was just hoping something would happen."

At this, Dianidra, who had expected nothing less than a box on the ears, stopped crying and looked at the old lady curiously. Her eyes were brown and dancy, and her cheeks, though withered and old, were red as apples. In her shabby bonnet and dress she looked younger than Dianidra herself.

"Well, well!" she chuckled, picking up her things. "Who are you, my pretty?"

"I'm Dianidra, the Princess who cannot dance," the Princess answered, hanging her head.

"Hoity-toity!" exclaimed the old lady. "Is that why you're crying on the King's highway?"

"Oh," sobbed Dianidra, "if I could only learn to dance!"

"Come here, child," said the old lady; and putting her head to Dianidra's heart, she listened long and knowingly.

"Yes, it's there," she muttered to herself. "It's there." All of which was very puzzling to the Princess. "Now, what do you know about dancing?"

"Let me see," said Dianidra, puckering up her brow and counting on her fingers. "Two turns, plus five slides, plus six steps, plus two swings, divided by a curtsy equals—Oh, dear, what does that equal? What does it equal?"

At that, what do you suppose happened? The old lady burst into laughter—and I mean it, really. Her bonnet tumbled off, and she laughed and laughed; and her hair tumbled down, and she laughed and laughed; her cape flew away, and still she kept laughing; till finally, in an awful chuckle, she just disappeared; and out of the laughter stepped the most beautiful fairy that you can imagine—with shimmery wings and smiley eyes. Dianidra was so surprised that she laughed a little bit, herself.

"That's right!" said the fairy. "Before you can learn to dance, you must learn to laugh! You must laugh with your lips, and then with your heart, and then with your feet, Dianidra, for that's what dancing is. And I'm going to send you to the most wonderful dancing masters in the world. Walk straight ahead between these tall trees till you come to yonder gray stone, and on the other side you will see your first dancing-master. He will tell you where to find the others. Good-bye, little Princess. Before the next sunrise you will be the most beautiful dancer in all the ten kingdoms."

Then, sweethearts, the fairy kissed Dianidra and flew up, up, out of sight. And I might tell you that the fairy's name was Happiness, if you have not already guessed it.

Something about the fairy kiss kept the Princess laughing softly all the way along between the tall trees until she came to the gray stone. She peeked 'round it curiously, and there, sure enough, was her first dancing master, a rippling, racing, merry little brook.

"Lean down, Dianidra," called the brook. And Dianidra, obeying, was drawn gently into its arms, and danced away with her over the stones, singing:

"Run, don't slip, glide, don't trip!
Merrily, gay, that's the way.
Dianidra, dancing's play."

You never could guess how pleasant it was dancing with the brook. The sunbeams came, too, and joined in. But finally the brook whispered to the Princess that on the top of the next hill another dancing master was waiting. So Dianidra sprang gaily up the bank, shaking the diamond drops of water out of her sunny locks and wringing out her dress.

And straightway she began running and gliding as easily as the brook, singing all the time the bit of a song he had taught her. When she had come to the top of the hill, there,

sure enough, was her second dancing master. 'Twas the south wind. He seized Dianidra's hands and spun her 'round in a hundred gay circles; and she bowed and swayed as gracefully as you have seen the flowers do when the south wind dances with them.

“Oh, off with a rush, now sway, now stay,
Now bend and bow, and again away!”

whispered the south wind in her ear. And away and away they danced, and Dianidra thought she would never weary of it. Over the flower-splashed hill they swept, down and down to the edge of the sea. And there the south wind left her to learn something from this, her last dancing master.

The sea rushed toward Dianidra with his hundred dancing waves, and, catching her up in his mighty arms, drew her out to where the swells rose and fell with majestic rhythm. The dance of the sea, dear hearts, was the most beautiful of all. First he held her curled in the hollow of a giant swell, then tossed her lightly as foam on the rising crest, where she floated gently to and fro. Now with a rush a great wave ran with her merrily up the sand, teaching her the most wonderful curtsy, the curtsy the waves have been dropping to the shore for years and hundreds of years.

After she had been dancing with the sea for a long, long time, he brought up from his treasure-chest a wonderful coral chain, and clasped it round her neck; and he wove her a crown of sea-weed and pearly sea-flowers, and, with a last caress, set her high upon the beach. So happy had Dianidra been, dancing with these wonderful dancing masters, that she hadn't noticed that the sun had slipped down behind the hill. It was night, and the moon came up out of the sea, and smiled at the runaway Princess dancing over the sands. Her satin dress was torn and dripping, but she was more beautiful now than ever before, because her eyes were laughing, her lips were laughing, her heart was laughing; but more than all else, her flying feet were laughing!



When Dianidra swept lightly into their midst it was
the most surprised company ever ? ? ? ?

It chanced that a most royal palace stood on that beach, and the Princess, running and gliding like the brook, and swaying and bending as the south wind, and curtsying and dipping like the sea, danced up to the golden gates, which were open, straight into the gaily lighted ball-room! Gorgeous Princesses, and Queens, and Ladies of high degree were dancing with Princes, and Kings, and Gentlemen of high degree, for it was the royalest ball of the year, and from the east and west, from the north and south, from all the ten kingdoms in fact, this sprightly and gallant company had gathered.

When Dianidra swept lightly into their midst, dears and ducks, it was the most surprised company ever. The musicians all stopped thumping and banging, and, with their cheeks still puffed out and their hands upraised, stared and stared. And the gorgeous Princesses, and Queens, and the Ladies of high degree stopped right in the midst of a wonderful figure, and, with their satin slippers daintily pointed to take the next step, stared and stared. And the Princes, and Kings, and the Gentlemen of high degree, with their courtly backs bent for the deep bow, stopped and stared and stared; and my goody! they stared the hardest of all. But Dianidra danced merrily on.

Just about as long as you could count twenty they all stared, then—"CRASH!!!!" went the music, and started up the most marvelous booming,—quite like the roar of the sea,—and the most royal of the Princes unbent his back, and ran lightly up to Dianidra, and away they whirled down the center of the room. Then—then I am sure you would have laughed at what happened next—because all the Kings and Princes and Gentlemen of high degree were so anxious to dance with Dianidra that they trod upon each other's toes; and in the scramble they lost their crowns, and they shoved and pushed each other quite terribly, without ever once saying "Beg pardon," or anything like that, while the Princesses, and Queens, and the Ladies of high degree



grew red and then white by turns, and stamped first one foot and then the other, and whispered behind their fans, and glared at the dancing Princess through their gold lorgnettes. No wonder! Dianidra, in her torn frock and seaweed crown and coral necklace, was more beautiful than all of them together; and who, after dancing with her, cared to dance with any one of them?

So she danced with each of the royal Gentlemen, but oftenest, as you are already supposing, with the most royal Prince; and pretty soon they danced out into the castle gardens, and perhaps she told him all about her strange dancing masters—but that I cannot say. But after a while the Prince ordered his most royal carriage, and the fifty white horses galloped over hill and dale to the palace of Dianidra's father.

There they found the crabbish King tearing out what little hair was left him, while the Queen, nearly smothered



with smelling-salts, was weeping more bitterly than ever, and sobbing: "A Princess who could not dance was better than no Princess at all!" and a good bit more that I haven't time to tell you. But when they saw Dianidra, they ceased their crabbishness and weepishness straight off, and when the Prince on his bended knee asked for the hand of the Princess, they were overjoyed and delighted—which is the way of Kings and Queens.

So Dianidra and the Prince were married in a year and a day, and the wedding was the most gorgeous you could imagine. As the fairy had promised, Dianidra was the most wonderful dancer in all the ten kingdoms, for in her dancing was the ripple of the brook, the swaying of the trees and flowers in the south wind, and the mystery of the sea. All through the years she and the most royal Prince danced together merrily, and so lived happily ever after. That, sweethearts, was the way of it.

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